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THE BEAUTIES
OF
ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

SELECTED FROM ALL HIS SERMONS AND DEVOTIONAL WRITINGS,
WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR.

BY

B. S. Esq., BARRISTER AT LAW.

LONDON :
T. C. NEWBY, 72, MORTIMER ST., CAVENDISH Sq.

1846.

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P R E F A C E .

THE very favorable reception given by the Public and the Press, to "The Beauties of Jeremy Taylor, D.D. published by Mr. T. C. Newby; has encouraged the Editor of that volume to prepare another of a similar description, from the eloquent sermons of Isaac Barrow D.D., which he ventures to hope will meet with as cordial a welcome as its predecessor.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

IT is with Dr. Isaac Barrow as with many other eminent authors, whose writings have won for them the admiration and respect of posterity, that but few materials can be found, to construct a biography of any length or interest. This is peculiarly true of Dr. Barrow, whose maturer life, with the exception of a few years spent in different parts of Europe, of which foreign sojourn there exist unfortunately none but the most scanty details, was passed in the learned seclusion and unchequered quiet of a college. Therefore a biographical notice of this profound scholar and eloquent and energetic writer, must necessarily be a brief and a simple one.

Dr. Isaac Barrow, descended from an ancient

family in the County of Suffolk, was the son of Mr. Thomas Barrow, a London Citizen and linen-draper to Charles the First. He was born, according to the statement of his executor and biographer Abraham Hill, in the month of October 1630, but some doubt has been thrown on the accuracy of this date by his friend Dr. Walter Pope, who says it was often pleasantly remarked by Barrow, that the 29th of February was, for one reason at least, the most favourable day of the year on which he could have been born; for that whilst his college friends (all those at least not born in a leap year) invited him each to a birth-day dinner once every year, he had to return the compliment but once in four years. Now as 1630 was not a leap-year, it follows that he was not born in that year if his own statement of the date of his birth be accurate.

When only four years old he had the misfortune to lose his mother, a loss to which may be probably attributed the somewhat turbulent and idle disposition of his boyhood, during the two or three years he remained in the Charter House School. Being subsequently placed at Felstead School in Essex, the better

nature of the boy developed itself, and in a short time he displayed a diligence and capacity that secured the good opinion of his master, who appointed him to be a kind of tutor or monitor to young Viscount Fairfax of Emely in Ireland, then educating at the same school. At the age of fourteen he was, through the influence of his uncle, Isaac Barrow (afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph) then fellow of Peter House Cambridge, named a pensioner of that college, and two years later in February 1645, when qualified for the university, he was admitted a pensioner of Trinity College, Cambridge. From his father's greatly altered circumstances, consequent on the ruin of the royal cause, young Barrow could receive no assistance from him, and for some time after entering Trinity College he was mainly indebted for his maintenance to the liberality of the learned Dr. Hammond, a grateful feeling of which obligation Barrow has shewn in an epitaph written by him upon his generous patron.

In 1647 he was chosen a scholar of this college, and though he continued to profess loyalty and attachment to the throne, and could never be prevailed upon to subscribe to

the covenant, he yet, by his steady conduct and remarkable abilities, preserved the esteem and good opinion of his superiors.

Though his inquiries were directed to most branches of human learning, yet his chief predilection appeared to be for the study of natural philosophy, in the prosecution of which he sedulously studied the works of Bacon, Descartes, Galileo, &c. In 1648 he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and the next year was chosen fellow of his college, a promotion he must have been mainly indebted for to his talents and acquirements, as his opinions, political and religious, being opposed to those of the then dominant party, he had little to expect from favour or partizanship. The entertainment of such opinions precluding him, as he thought, from any chance of success in the church, he turned his attention towards the profession of physic, and with this view, devoted himself steadily to the study of anatomy, botany and chemistry. However, after having made some progress in the acquisition of these sciences, he, on a more careful self-examination, and encouraged also by the advice and persuasion of his uncle, (Isaac Barrow) abandoned the less congenial

career of physic, and applied himself to the study of divinity. In the course of his reading on this subject he soon became aware of the dependence of chronology on astronomy, and in pursuit of this vein of Knowledge, he was naturally led to turn his attention to geometry, and a diligent perusal of the Elements of Euclid, and the works of the other ancient mathematicians—

In June 1652 he was incorporated in the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Oxford, and on Dr. Duport resigning the chair of the Greek professorship, and recommending his pupil Barrow as his successor, he (Barrow) wrote an excellent probational exercise, which, however, failed to secure his nomination, not from the want of merit, but as some of his biographers suppose, from his being suspected of a leaning towards armenianism. This disappointment, led, it is thought, to his resolution of leaving England and travelling for a while on the Continent, to enable him to do which he was obliged to sell his books. Accordingly in the year 1655 he passed over to France, and at Paris joined his father, who was amongst the followers of the English court there, and in such straitened circum-

stances as to stand in need of pecuniary aid from his son, which the latter readily gave him from his own slender means.

After a few months stay in Paris, during which time his edition of Euclid had been published at Cambridge he set out for Florence, where his travels must have terminated from want of funds, but for the kindness of Mr. Stock, a young merchant of London, who supplied him with money. To this gentleman he afterwards dedicated his edition of Euclid's *Data*. Being prevented from proceeding to Rome, by rumours of the plague having broken out in that city, he embarked at Leghorn on the 6th November 1556 for Smyrna. In the course of the voyage thither, the vessel in which he was a passenger, was attacked by a Barbary Corsair, but which meeting with a stouter resistance than it anticipated, sheered off. Barrow on this occasion gave proofs of his manliness and courage, as he not only refused to go below during the attack, but exerted himself in working one of the guns. After some time spent at Smyrna, he proceeded to Constantinople, where he met with a friendly reception from Sir Thomas Bendish, the English Ambassador,

and another countryman of his, Sir Jonathan Daws, with both of whom, he afterwards kept up an intercourse by letters.

After remaining a year in Constantinople, great part of which time was employed in the study of the Greek fathers, and especially the writings of Saint Chrysostom, for whom he entertained a more than ordinary predilection, he sailed for Venice, whence he returned by way of Germany and Holland to England, where he arrived in 1659.

Sometime after his return, though the then precarious state of the Church, and the troubled aspect of the times, held out but little encouragement to candidates for episcopal ordination, Barrow had himself ordained by bishop Browning. At the restoration it was natural to expect from her attachment to the royal cause that he would have met with preferment, but like so many others similarly circumstanced, he was forgotten by the merriest of monarchs, but the most careless defender of the faith, and had only for recompense the recollection of his fidelity. In 1660, he became Greek professor of the university of Cambridge, and the following year was chosen fellow of the Royal Society. This same year Mr. Lucas

having founded a mathematical lecture at Cambridge, Barrow was appointed the first professor; and though the holding of this place and the professorship of Gresham College was not incompatible he resigned the latter. In 1669 he retired from the mathematical chair of Cambridge, in which he was succeeded by his friend, the afterwards illustrious Sir Isaac Newton. In 1670 he seems to have deserted mathematics for the muses, as in the course of that year he wrote a Latin poem on the death of the Duchess of Orleans, an epicidium on the Duke of Albemarle, and a Latin ode upon the Trinity. Whilst still a fellow of Trinity College he was collated by his uncle, the Bishop of St. Asaph, to a small sinecure in Wales, and by Dr. Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury, to a prebend in that cathedral, the profits of both which he employed in works of charity, and resigned the benefices when he became master of his college, to which dignity he was appointed by the King in 1672, upon conferring which favour the King was pleased to say that "he had given it to the best scholar in England." The letters patent in this instance contained a permission to marry, which Barrow requested should be erased as contrary to the

statutes. The same year he was made a doctor of divinity by mandate; and in 1765 was chosen vice chancellor of the university.

The learned, pious and honourable career of Dr. Isaac Barrow was brought to a close in the year 1677, though he was still in the prime of life (his age being only 47), and in the full vigour of his faculties. Being in London in the April of that year he was chosen to preach the Passion Sermon at Guildhall. This sermon was one of the very few of the great number he has written, which he had an opportunity of delivering to a congregation, a circumstance which may account for the rather immoderate length of many of them. As an instance of which may be mentioned the Spital sermon on "The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor," preached before the corporation, which took up three hours and a half in the delivery. On leaving the pulpit Dr. Barrow was asked if he was not tired, to which he replied "that he began to be weary of standing so long." We are ignorant of the impression made upon the assembled aldermen by this discourse so long drawn out, but it is on record that on another occasion the base love of lucre of the door keepers of Westminster Abbey, was not to

be controlled by even the eloquence of a Barrow, for when he was at one time preaching in the Abbey, the usual time occupied by the sermon, had elapsed, and a crowd of people were waiting to be admitted to see the monuments. The showmen, judging from the tenor of the sermon, that there was yet but little chance of its coming to a speedy close, became alarmed for the loss of their accustomed gains, and in defiance of every idea, not to say of piety, but of common decency and decorum, "caused the organ to be struck up against the preacher, and would not give over playing until they had blowed him down."

Soon after the 13th of April, the day on which Dr. Barrow preached the Passion Sermon at Guildhall, he felt indisposed, and in a few days the disease assumed all the symptoms of a malignant fever, which ended in his death on the 4th of May 1677. This fatal event, it is surmised, was hastened, if not mainly caused, by his imprudently taking too large a dose of opium, which circumstance is thus alluded to in the life of his successor to the mastership of Trinity College, Dr. John North. "The good Dr. Barrow ended his days in London, in a prebend's house that had

a little stair to it out of the cloister, which made him call it a *man's nest*, and I presume it is so called at this day. The master's disease was high fever. It had been his custom, contracted when he was at Constantinople, in all his maladies to cure himself with opium. And being very ill (probably) augmented his dose, and so inflamed his fever, and at the same time obstructed the crisis : for he was as a man knocked down, and had the eyes as of one distracted. Our doctor (Dr. North) seeing him so, was struck with horror, for he that knew him so well in his best health, could best distinguish ; and when he left him he concluded he should see him no more, and so it proved."

The writer of the article " Barrow," in the biographical dictionary, edited by Dr. Chalmers, gives the following description of his person and character. " As to his person he was low of stature, lean and of a pale complexion ; and negligent of his dress to a fault ; of extraordinary strength, a thin skin, and very sensible of cold ; his eyes grey, clear, and somewhat short sighted ; his hair a light brown, very fine and curling. He was of a healthy constitution, very fond of tobacco, which he

used to call panpharmacon, or universal medicine, and imagined it helped to compose and regulate his thoughts. If he was guilty of any intemperance it seemed to be in the love of fruit, which he thought very salutary. He slept little, generally rising in the winter months, before day.* His conduct and behaviour were truly amiable; he was always ready to assist others, open and communicative

* This habit of too early rising led to an occurrence, that furnished a proof of Barrow's courage, presence of mind, and generous sense of justice, that extended itself even to one of the brute creation. In his earlier days being on a visit to a friend in the country, he arose one morning before dawn and walked into the garden unaware that a fierce and powerful mastiff was let loose each night to guard the premises. The dog on seeing a stranger in the garden at that unusual hour, flew at him. Barrow grasped with both hands, the animal by the throat, threw him down and lay upon him, with the intent to strangle him if possible. The thought however flashed upon him that the dog was acting only in the faithful discharge of his duty, and merited praise rather than punishment. He therefore instead of killing him, cried out loudly for help until some of the servants roused by the voice, hastened to the spot, and released Barrow from the very close but not fraternal embrace which united him to the mastiff.

in his conversation, in which he generally spoke to the importance as well as truth, of any question proposed, facetious in his talk upon fit occasions, and skilful to accommodate his discourse to different capacities; of indefatigable industry in various studies, clear judgment on all arguments, and steady virtue under all difficulties: of a calm temper in factious times, and of large charity in mean estate; he was easy and contented with a scanty fortune, and with the same decency and moderation maintained his character under the temptations of prosperity. In short he was, perhaps, the greatest scholar of his time; and as an ingenious writer expresses it, "he may be esteemed as having shewn a compass of invention equal, if not superior, to any of the moderns, Sir Isaac Newton only excepted."

Dr. Barrow's works were numerous and on various subjects, theological, poetical and mathematical, the two last written chiefly in Latin. His theological works in three volumes folio were first published in 1683, under the careful revision of one of his executors, Dr. John Tillotson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, who has said of them—"That he must be either a perfectly good or a pro-

digiously bad man, that can read them over without being the better for them," and it is justly remarked by a later editor of Dr. Barrow's works—"That the same remark may be extended to their literary excellence. For he must be singularly fastidious, or singularly dull who can read them without pleasure; and either perfect in eloquence, or prodigiously incapable of it, who can read them without advantage."

THE BEAUTIES
OF
ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

SERMON.

THE PLEASANTNESS OF RELIGION.

Prov. iii. 17.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her
paths are peace.

W I S D O M.

WISDOM of itself is delectable and satisfactory, as it implies a revelation of truth, and a detection of error to us. It is like light, pleasant to behold, casting a sprightly lustre, and diffusing a benign influence all about; presenting a goodly prospect of

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things to the eyes of our mind ; displaying objects in their due shapes, postures, magnitudes, and colours ; quickening our spirits with a comfortable warmth, and disposing our minds to a cheerful activity ; dispelling the darkness of ignorance, scattering the mists of doubt, driving away the spectres of delusive fancy ; mitigating the cold of sullen melancholy ; discovering obstacles, securing progress, and making the passage of life clear, open. and pleasant. We are all naturally endowed with a strong appetite to know, to see, to pursue truth ; and with a bashful abhorrence from being deceived and entangled in mistake. And as success in inquiry after truth affords matter of joy and triumph ; so being conscious of error and miscarriage therein, is attended with shame and sorrow. These desires Wisdom in the most perfect manner satisfies, not by entertaining us with dry, empty, fruitless theories, upon mean and vulgar subjects ; but by enriching our minds with excellent and useful knowledge, directed to the noblest objects, and serviceable to the highest ends. Nor in its own nature only, but much more in its worthy consequences is Wisdom exceedingly pleasant and peaceable : in general, by disposing us to acquire and to enjoy all the good, delight, and happiness

we are capable of ; and by freeing us from all the inconveniences, mischiefs, and infelicities our condition is subject to. For whatever good from clear understanding, deliberate advice, sagacious foresight, stable resolution, dexterous address, right intention, and orderly proceeding, doth naturally result, Wisdom confers : whatever evil blind ignorance, false presumption, unwary credulity, precipitate rashness, unsteady purpose, ill contrivance,, backwardness, inability, unwieldiness and confusion of thought, beget, Wisdom prevents. From a thousand snares and treacherous allurements, from innumerable rocks and dangerous surprises, from exceedingly many needless encumbrances and vexatious toils of fruitless endeavour, she redeems and secures us.

Wisdom begets in us a hope of success in our actions, and is usually attended therewith. Now, what is more delicious than hope ? what more satisfactory than success ? *That* is like the pursuit of a flying enemy, *this* like gathering the spoil ; *that* like viewing the ripe corn, *this* like the joy of harvest itself. And he that aims at a good end, and knows he uses proper means to attain it, why should he despair of success, since effects naturally follow their

causes, and the Divine Providence is wont to afford its concurrence to such proceedings ? Beside that such well-grounded hope confirms resolution, and quickens activity, which mainly conduce to the prosperous issue of designs.

Wisdom prevents discouragement from the possibility of ill success, yea, and makes disappointment itself tolerable. For if either the foresight of a possible miscarriage should discourage us from adventuring on action, or inculpable frustration were intolerable, we should with no heart apply ourselves to anything ; there being no designs in this world, though founded upon the most sound advice, and prosecuted by the most diligent endeavour, which may not be defeated, as depending upon divers causes above our power, and circumstances beyond our prospect. The inconstant opinions, uncertain resolutions, mutable affections, and fallacious pretences of men, upon which the accomplishment of most projects rely, may easily deceive and disappoint us. The imperceptible course of nature exerting itself in sudden tempests, diseases, and unlucky casualties, may surprise us, and give an end to our businesses and lives together. However, the irresistible power of the Divine Providence, guided by the unsearchable.

counsel of his will, we can never be assured that it will not interpose, and hinder the effects of our endeavours. Yet notwithstanding, when we act prudently, we have no reason to be disheartened ; because, having good intention, and using fit means, and having done our best, as no deserved blame, so no considerable damage can arrive to us : and though we find Almighty God hath crossed us, yet we are sure he is not displeased with us. Which consideration, wherewith Wisdom furnishes us, will make the worst success not only tolerable, but comfortable to us. For hence we have reason to hope, that the All-wise Goodness reserves a better reward for us, and will sometime recompense not only the good purposes we unhappily pursued, but also the unexpected disappointment we patiently endured ;—and that however we shall be no losers in the end.

Wisdom makes all the troubles, griefs, and pains incident to life, whether casual adversities, or natural afflictions, easy and supportable ; by rightly valuing the importance, and moderating the influence of them. It suffers not busy fancy to alter the nature, amplify the degree, or extend the duration of them, by presenting them more sad, heavy, and remediless than they truly

are. It allows them no force beyond what naturally and necessarily they have, nor contributes nourishment to their increase. It keeps them at a due distance, not permitting them to encroach upon the soul, or to propagate their influence beyond their proper sphere. It will not let external mischances, as poverty and disgrace, to produce an inward sense which is beyond their natural efficacy : nor corporeal affections of sickness and pain to disturb the mind, with which they have nothing to do. The region of these malignant distempers being at most but the habit of the body, Wisdom by effectual antidotes repels them from the heart, and inward parts of the soul. If anything, sin, and our unworthy miscarriages towards God, should vex and discompose us : yet this trouble, Wisdom, by representing the Divine goodness, and His tender mercies in our ever-blessed Redeemer, doth perfectly allay. And as for all other adversities, it abates their noxious power, by showing us they are either merely imaginary, or very short and temporary : that they admit of remedy, or at most do not exclude comfort, not wholly hindering the operations of the mind, nor extinguishing its joys ; that they may have a profitable use, and pleasant end ; and, however, neither imply bad conscience, nor induce obligation

to punishment. For Wisdom hath always a good conscience attending it, that purest delight and richest cordial of the soul ; that brazen wall, and impregnable fortress against both external assaults, and internal commotions ; that *continual feast*, whereon the mind, destitute of all other repast, with a never languishing appetite, may entertain itself ; that faithful witness, and impartial judge, whoever accuses, always acquitting the innocent soul ; that certain friend, in no strait failing, in no adversity deserting ; that sure refuge in all storms of fortune, and persecutions of disgrace ; which, as Solomon here notes, renders a man's *sleep sweet*, and undisturbed with fearful phantasms, his heart light, and his steps secure ; and, if anything can, make the stoical paradox good, and cause the wise man to smile in extremity of torment ; arming his mind with an invincible courage, and infusing a due confidence into it, whereby he bears up cheerfully against malicious reproach, undauntedly sustains adversity, and triumphs over bad fortune. And this invaluable treasure the wise man is only capable of possessing ; who certainly knows, and heartily approves the grounds upon which he proceeds ; whereas the fool, building his choice upon blind chance, or violent passion, or giddy fancy,

or uncertain example, not upon the steady warrant of good reason, cannot avoid being perplexed with suspicion of mistake, and so necessarily is deprived of the comfort of a good conscience.

Wisdom confers a facility, expert readiness, and dexterity, in action ; which is a very pleasant and commodious quality, and exceedingly sweetens activity. To do things with difficulty, struggling, and immoderate contention, disheartens a man, quells his courage, blunts the edge of his resolution, renders him sluggish and averse from business, though apprehended never so necessary and of great moment. These obstructions Wisdom removes, facilitating operations by directing the intention to ends possible and attainable, by suggesting fit means and instruments to work by, by contriving right methods and courses of process ; the mind by it being stored with variety of good principles, sure rules, and happy expedients, reposed in the memory, and ready upon all occasions to be produced, and employed in practice.

Wisdom procures and preserves a constant favour and fair respect of men, purchases a good name, and upholds reputation in the world ; which things are naturally desirable, commodious for life, encouragements to good,

and preventive of many inconveniences. The composed frame of mind, uniform and comely demeanour, compliant and inoffensive conversation, fair and punctual dealing, considerate motions, and dexterous addresses of wise men, naturally beget esteem and affection in those that observe them. Neither than these things is there anything more commendable to human regard. As symmetry and harmony to the animal senses, so delectable is an even temper of soul and orderly tenour of actions to rational apprehensions. Folly is freakish and humorous, impertinent and obstreperous, inconstant and inconsistent, peevish and exceptionous, : and consequently fastidious to society, and productive of aversation and disrespect. But the wise man is stable in his ways, consonant to himself, suiting his actions to his words, and those to his principles, and all to the rule of right reason ; so that you may know where to find him, and how to deal with him ; may easily please him, which makes his acquaintance acceptable, and his person valuable : beside that real worth of itself commands respect, and extorts veneration from men, and usually prosperity waits upon his well-advised attempts, which exceedingly adorn and advance the credit of the undertaker : however, if he fail sometime, his

usual deportment salves his repute, and easily makes it credible it was no fault of his, but of his fortune. If a fool prosper, the honour is attributed to propitious chance ; if he miscarry, to his own ill management : but the entire glory of happy undertakings crowns the head of Widsom ; while the disgrace of unlucky events falls elsewhere. His light, like that of the sun, cannot totally be eclipsed ; it may be dimmed, but never extinguished, and always maintains a day, though overclouded with misfortune. Who less esteems the African captain for being overthrown in that last fatal battle, wherein he is said to have shown the best skill, and yet endured the worst success ? Who contemns Cato, and other the grave citizens of Rome, for embracing the just, but improsperous cause of the Commonwealth ; A wise man's circumstances may vary and fluctuate like the floods about a rock ; but he persists unmoveably the same, and his reputation unshaken : for he can always render a good account of his actions, and by reasonable apology elude the assaults of reproach.

Wisdom instructs us to examine, compare, and rightly to value the objects that court our affections, and challenge our care ; and thereby regulates our passions, and moderates our endeavours, which begets a pleasant

serenity and peaceable tranquillity of mind. For when, being deluded with false shows, and relying upon ill-grounded presumptions, we highly esteem, passionately affect, and eagerly pursue things of little value in themselves, or concernment to us, as we unhand-somely prostitute our affections, and prodigally mis-spend our time, and vainly lose our labour ; so the event not answering our expectation, our minds are thereby confounded, disturbed, and distempered.

But the light of Wisdom, as it unmasks specious imposture, and bereaves it of its false colours ; so it penetrates into the retirements of true excellency, and reveals its genuine lustre. For example, corporeal pleasure, which so powerfully allures and enchants us, Wisdom declares that it is but a present, momentary, and transient satisfaction of brutish sense, dimming the light, sullyng the beauty, impairing the vigour, and restraining the activity of the mind ; diverting from better operations, and indisposing it to enjoy purer delights ; leaving no comfortable relish or gladsome memory behind it, but often followed with bitterness, regret, and disgrace : that the profit the world so greedily gapes after, is but the possession of trifles not valuable in themselves, nor rendering the possessors of them so ; accidentally obtained

and promiscuously enjoyed by all sorts, but commonly by the worst of men ; difficultly acquired, and easily lost ; however, to be used but for a short time, and then to be resigned into uncertain hands : that the honour men so dote upon is ordinarily but the difference of a few petty circumstances, a peculiar name or title, a determinate place, a distinguishing ensign ; things of only imaginary excellence, derived from chance, and conferring no advantage, except from some little influence they have upon the arbitrary opinion and fickle humour of the people ; complacence in which is vain, and reliance upon it dangerous. That power and dominion, which men so impatiently struggle for, are but necessary evils introduced to restrain the bad tempers of men most evil to them that enjoy them ; requiring tedious attendance, distracting care, and vexatious toil ; attended with frequent disappointment, opprobrious censure, and dangerous envy ; having such real burdens, and slavish incumbrances, sweetened only by superficial pomps, strained obsequiousness, some petty privileges and exemptions scarcely worth the mentioning. That wit and parts, of which men make such ostentation, are but natural endowments, commendable only in order to use, apt to engender pride and vanity, and hugely dan-

gerous if abused or misemployed. What should I mention beauty, that fading toy; or bodily strength and activity, qualities so palpably inconsiderable? Upon these, and such like flattering objects, so adored by vulgar opinion, wisdom exercising severe and impartial judgment, and perceiving in them no intrinsic excellence, no solid content springing from them, no perfection thence accruing to the mind, no high reward allotted to them, no security to the future condition, or other durable advantages proceeding from them; it concludes, they deserve not any high opinion of the mind, nor any vehement passion of the soul, nor any laborious care to be employed on them, and moderates our affections towards them; it frees us from anxious desire of them; from being transported with excessive joy in the acquisition of them; from being overwhelmed with disconsolate sorrow at the missing of them or parting with them; from repining and envying at those who have better success than ourselves in the procuring them; from immoderate toil in getting, and care in preserving them: and so delivering us from all these unquiet anxieties of thought, tumultuous perturbations of passion, and tedious vexations of body, it maintains our minds in a cheerful, calm, quiet indifferency, and com-

fortable liberty. On the other side, things of real worth and high concernment, that produce great satisfaction to the mind, and are mainly conducive to our happiness, such as are a right understanding and strong sense of our obligations to Almighty God, and relations to men, a sound temper and complexion of mind, a virtuous disposition, a capacity to discharge the duties of our places, a due qualification to enjoy the happiness of the other world ; these and such like things, by discovering their nature and the effects resulting from them, it engages us highly to esteem, ardently to affect, and industriously to pursue ; so preventing the inconveniences that follow the want of them, and conveying the benefits arising from the possession of them.

The principal advantage of Wisdom is its acquainting us with the nature and reason of true religion, and affording convictive arguments to persuade to the practice of it : which is accompanied with the purest delight, and attended with the most solid content imaginable. I say, the nature of religion, wherein it consists, and what it requires ; the mistake of which produceth daily so many mischiefs and inconveniences in the world, and exposes so good a name to so much reproach. It sheweth it consisteth

not in fair professions and glorious pretences but in real practice ; not in a pertinacious adherence to any sect or party. but in a sincere love of goodness, and dislike of naughtiness, wherever discovering itself : not in vain ostentations and flourishes of outward performance, but in an inward good complexion of mind, exerting itself in works of true devotion and charity ; not in a nice orthodoxy, or politic subjection of our judgments to the peremptory dictates of men, but in a sincere love of truth, in a hearty approbation of, and compliance with, the doctrines fundamentally good, and necessary to be believed ; not in harsh censuring and virulently inveighing against others, but in careful amending our own ways ; not in a peevish crossness and obstinate repugnancy to received laws and customs, but in a quiet and peaceable submission to the express laws of God, and lawful commands of man ; not in a furious zeal for or against trivial circumstances, but in a conscionable practising the substantial parts of religion ; not in a frequent talking or contentious disputing about it, but in a ready observance of the unquestionable rules and prescripts of it : in a word, that religion consists in nothing else but doing what becomes our relation to God, in a conformity or similitude to his nature, and

in a willing obedience to his holy will : to which by potent incentives it allures and persuades us ; by representing to us his transcendently glorious attributes, conspicuously displayed in the frame, order, and government of the world : that wonderful Power, which erected this great and goodly fabric ; that incomprehensible Wisdom, which preserves it in a constant harmony ; that immense Goodness, which hath so carefully provided for the various necessities, delights, and comforts of its innumerable inhabitants. I say, by representing those infinitely glorious perfections, it engages us with highest respect to esteem, reverence, and honour Him.

SERMON.

THE PROFITABLENESS OF GODLINESS.

1 Tim. IV., 8.

BUT GODLINESS IS PROFITABLE FOR ALL THINGS.

PROFIT, MAN'S CHIEF OBJECT.

How generally men, with most unanimous consent, are devoted to profit, as to the immediate scope of their designs and aim of their doings, if with the slightest attention we view what is acted upon this theatre of human affairs, we cannot but discern. All that we see men so very serious and industrious about, which we call business; that which they trudge for in the streets, which

they work or wait for in the shops, which they meet and crowd for at the exchange, which they sue for in the hall, and solicit for at the Court, which they plough and dig for, which they march and fight for in the field, which they travel for on land, and sail for (among rocks and storms) upon the sea, which they plod for in the closet, and dispute for in the schools (yea, may we not add, which they frequently pray for and preach for in the Church?) what is it but profit? Is it not this apparently, for which men so eagerly contest and quarrel, so bitterly envy and emulate, so fiercely clamour and inveigh, so cunningly supplant and undermine one another; which stuffeth their hearts with mutual hatred and spite, which tippeth their tongues with slander and reproach, which often embueth their hands with blood and slaughter; for which they expose their lives and limbs to danger, for which they undergo grievous toils and drudgeries, for which they distract their mind with cares, and *pierce their heart with sorrows*; to which they sacrifice their present ease and content; yea, to which commonly they prostitute their honour and conscience? This, if you mark it, is the great mistress, which is with so passionate rivalry everywhere wooed and courted; this is the common mark, which

all eyes aim, and all endeavours strike at ; this the hire which men demand for all their pains, the prize they hope for all their combats, the harvest they seek from all the year's assiduous labour. This is the bait, by which you may inveigle most men any whither ; and the most certain sign, by which you may prognosticate what any man will do ; for mark where his profit is, there will he be. This some professedly and with open face, others slyly and under thin veils of pretence (under guise of friendship, of love to public good, of loyalty, of religious zeal) ; some directly and in a plain track, others obliquely and by subtle trains ; some by sordid and base means, others in ways more cleanly and plausible ; some gravely and modestly, others wildly and furiously ; all (very few excepted) in one manner or another, do clearly in most of their proceedings level and drive at.

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BENEFITS OF PIETY.

If, then, it be a gross absurdity to desire the fruits, and not to take care of the root, not to cultivate the stock whence they sprout ; if every prince gladly would have

his subjects loyal and obedient, every master would have his servants honest, diligent, and observant, every parent would have his children officious and grateful, every man would have his friend faithful and kind, every one would have those just and sincere, with whom he doth negotiate or converse ; if any one would choose to be related to such, and would esteem their relation a happiness ; then consequently should every man in reason strive to further piety, from whence alone those good dispositions and practices do proceed.

Piety doth fit a man for all conditions, qualifying him to pass through them all with the best advantage, wisely, cheerfully, and safely ; so as to incur no considerable harm or detriment by them.



FALSE HONOUR.

If from bare worldly wealth (that which usurpeth the name of profit here) a man seeketh honour, he is deluded, for he is not thereby truly honourable ; he is but a shining earth-worm, a well-trapped ass, a gaudy statue, a theatrical grandee : with God, who judgeth most rightly, he is mean and despi-

cable : no intelligent person can inwardly respect him. Even here, in this world of fallacy and dctage, the wisest and soberest men, whose judgment usually doth sway that of others, cannot but condemn him, as master of no real good, nor fit for any good purpose ; as seeing that in the end he will prove most beggarly and wretched.



VALUE OF CONSTANCY.

It is a fair ornament of a man, and a grand convenience both to himself, and to others with whom he converseth or dealeth, to act regularly, uniformly, and consistently ; freeing a man's self from distraction and irresolution in his mind, from change and confusion in his proceedings ; securing others from delusion and disappointment in their transactions with him. Even a bad rule constantly observed, is, therefore, better than none : order and perseverance in any way seemeth more convenient than roving and tossing about in uncertainties. But, secluding a regard to the precepts of religion, there can hardly be any sure or settled rule, which firmly can engage a man to, or effectually restrain a man from, anything.

ADVANTAGES OF PIETY.

BE a man never so rich, so powerful, so learned, and knowing, so prosperous in his affairs, so honourable in the opinions and affections of men : yet nowise happy can he be, if he is not pious ; seeing he wanteth the best goods, and is subject to the worst evils ; seeing he wanteth the love and favour of God, he wanteth peace and satisfaction of conscience, he wanteth a right enjoyment of present things, he wanteth security concerning his final welfare. Be he never so poor, so low in the eyes of men, so forlorn and destitute of worldly conveniences ; yet if he be pious, he cannot be wretched : for he hath an interest in goods incomparably most precious, and is safe from all considerable evils ; he hath a free resort to the inexhaustible fountain of all happiness, he hath a right to immense and endless felicity, the which eminently containeth all the goods we are capable of ; he is possessed thereof in hope and certain reversion ; there is but a moment to pass before his complete fruition of it. The want of all other petty things no more can maim the integrity of his felicity, than cutting the hair, or paring the nails, do mutilate

a man ; all other things are but superfluities or excrescences, in regard to the constitution of happiness.

It is a peculiar advantage of piety, that it furnisheth employment fit for us, worthy of us, hugely grateful, and highly beneficial to us. Man is a very busy and active creature, which cannot live and do nothing, whose thoughts are in restless motion, whose desires are ever stretching at somewhat, who perpetually will be working either good or evil to himself ; wherefore greatly profitable must that thing be, which determineth him to act well, to spend his care and pain on that which is truly advantageous to him ; and that is religion only. It alone fasteneth our thoughts, affections, and endeavours, upon occupations worthy the dignity of our nature, suiting the excellency of our natural capacities and endowments, tending to the perfection and advancement of our reason, to the enriching and ennobling of our souls.

Secluding that, we have nothing in the world to study, to affect, to pursue, not very mean and below us, not very base and misbecoming us, as men of reason and judgment. What have we to do but to eat and drink, like horses or like swine ; but to sport and play, like children or apes ; but to

bicker and scuffle about trifles and impertinences, like idiots? what, but to scrape or scramble for useless pelf; to hunt after empty shows and shadows of honour, or the vain fancies and dreams of men? what but to wallow or bask in sordid pleasures, the which soon degenerate into remorse and bitterness? To which sort of employments were a man confined, what a pitiful thing would he be, and how inconsiderable were his life! Were a man designed only, like a fly, to buzz about here for a time, sucking in the air, and licking the dew, then soon to vanish back into nothing, or to be transformed into worms; how sorry and despicable a thing were he! And such, without religion, we should be. But it supplieth us with business of a most worthy nature and lofty importance; it setteth us upon doing things great and noble as can be; it engageth us to free our mind from all fond conceits, and cleanse our hearts from all corrupt affections; to curb our brutish appetites, to tame our wild passions, to correct our perverse inclinations, to conform the dispositions of our soul and the actions of our life to the eternal laws of righteousness and goodness: it putteth us upon the imitation of God, and aiming at the resemblance of His perfections; upon obtaining a friendship and

maintaining a correspondence with the High and Holy One ; upon fitting our minds for conversation and society with the wisest and purest spirits above ; upon providing for an immortal state, upon the acquist of joy and glory everlasting : it employeth us in the divinest actions, of promoting virtue, of performing beneficence, of serving the public, and doing good to all : the being exercised in which things doth indeed render a man highly considerable, and his life excellently valuable.

SERMON.

THE REWARD OF HONOURING GOD.

1 Sam. ii. 30.

For them that honour me, I will honour.

H O N O U R .

A moderate regard to honour is commendable as an instance of humanity or good will to men, yea, as an argument of humility, or a sober conceit of ourselves. For to desire another man's esteem, and consequently his love (which in some kind or degree is an inseparable companion of esteem), doth imply somewhat of reciprocal esteem and affection toward him ; and to prize the judgment of other men concerning us, doth signify, that we are not oversatisfied with our own.

We might, for its farther commendation, allege the authority of the more cool and candid sort of philosophers (such as grounded their judgment of things upon notions agreeable to common sense and experience ; who adapted their rules of practice to the nature of man, such as they found it in the world, not such as they framed it in their own fancies), who have ranked honour among the principal of things desirable, and adorned it with fairest elogies : terming it a divine thing, the best of exterior goods, the most honest fruit and most ample reward of true virtue ; adjudging, that to neglect the opinions of men (especially of persons worthy and laudable) is a sign of stupid baseness, that to contemn them is an effect of unreasonable haughtiness ; representing the love of honour (rightly grounded and duly moderated) not only as the parent and guardian (as productive and preservative) of other virtues, but as a virtue itself, of no small magnitude and lustre in the constellation of virtues, the virtue of generosity. A virtue, which, next to the spirit of true religion (next to a hearty reverence toward the supreme blessed Goodness, and that holy charity toward men, which springeth thence), doth lift a man up nearest to heaven ; doth raise his mind

above the sordid desires, the sorry cares, the fond humours, the perverse and froward passions, with which men commonly are possessed and acted : that virtue, which inflames a man with courage, so that he dares perform what reason and duty require of him, that he disdains to do what is bad or base ; which inspires him with sincerity, that he values his honesty before all other interests and respects, that he abhors to wrong or deceive, to flatter or abuse any man, that he cannot endure to seem otherwise than he is, to speak otherwise than he means, to act otherwise than he promises and professes ; which endows him with courtesy, that he is ready to yield every man his due respect, to afford any man what help and succour he is able ; that virtue, which renders a man upright in all his dealings, and correspondent to all his obligations ; a loyal subject to his prince, and a true lover of his country, a candid judge of persons and things, an earnest favourer of whatever is good and commendable, a faithful and hearty friend, a beneficial and useful neighbour, a grateful resenter and requiter of courtesies, hospitable to the stranger, bountiful to the poor, kind and good to all the world : that virtue, in fine, which constitutes a man of honour, who surely is the best

man next to a man of conscience. Thus may honour be valued from natural light, and according to common sense.

GOOD EXAMPLE OF THOSE IN POWER.

It is a most notorious thing, both to reason and inexperience, what extreme advantage great persons have, especially by the influence of their practice, to bring God himself, as it were, into credit : how much it is in their power easily to render piety a thing in fashion and request. For in what they do, they never are alone, or are ill attended ; whither they go, they carry the world along with them : they lead crowds of people after them, as well when they go in the right way, as when they run astray. The custom of living well, no less than other modes and garbs, will be soon conveyed and propagated from the court : the city and country will readily draw good manners thence (good manners truly so called ; not only superficial forms of civility, but real practices of goodness.) For the main body of men goeth not *qua eundum*, *sed qua itur* ; not according to rules and reasons, but after

examples and authorities; especially of great persons, who are like stars, shining in high and conspicuous places, by which men steer their course: their actions are to be reckoned not as single or solitary ones, but are, like their persons, of a public and representative nature, involving the practice of others, who are by them awed, or shamed into compliance. Their good example especially hath this advantage, that men can find no excuse, can have no pretence why they should not follow it. Piety is not only beautified, but fortified by their dignity; it not only shines in them with a clearer lustre, but with a mightier force and influence: a word, a look (the least intimation) from them will do more good, than others' best eloquence, clearest reason, most earnest endeavours. For it is in them, if they would apply themselves to it, as the wisest prince implies, to *scatter iniquity with their eyes*. A smile of theirs were able to enliven virtue, and diffuse it all about; a frown might suffice to mortify and dissipate wickedness. Such apparently is their power of honouring God; and in proportion thereto, surely great is their obligation to do it: of them peculiarly God expects it, and all equity exacts it. What the meaner rank of servants do is of some consequence indeed,

but doth not import so much to the master's reputation ; their good word concerning him, their good carriage toward him, doth not credit him so much. But those whom he employs in matters of highest trust and importance to his affairs, whom he places in the nearest degree to himself (seats even in his own throne, upon his own tribunal), whom he feeds plentifully and daintily, maintains in a handsome garb, allows largely ; as their deportment doth much reflect on their lord's esteem, as they are highly capable of advancing his repute ; so all the rules of ingenuity and gratitude, all the laws of justice and equity, do oblige them earnestly to endeavour it. And it is indeed no less their concernment to do so. For if there be disorders, prejudicial to the master's honour and interest, frequently committed in the family, it is those servants must be responsible : if due order be there kept to his glory and advantage, they shall chiefly be commended, and peculiarly hear the *Euge, bone serve*. They must be loaded with other men's faults, or crowned for other men's virtues, as their behaviour hath respectively contributed to them. Those universal rules of equity, proposed in the Gospel, will, in God's reckoning with and requiting men, be

punctually observed : *to whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required:* answerable to the improvement of what is delivered in trust shall the acceptance be.

SERMON.

UPRIGHT WALKING—SURE WALKING.

Prov. x. 9.

HE THAT WALKETH UPRIGHTLY—WALKETH SURELY.

UPRIGHTNESS.

The upright walker doth tread upon firm ground. He doth build his practice, not upon the perilous bogs, the treacherous quagmires, the devouring quicksands of uncouth, bold, impious paradoxes (such as have been vented by Epicurus, by Machiavel, by others more lately, whose infamous names are too well known, as the effect of their pestilent notions are too much felt ; but upon solid, safe,

approved, and well tried principles ; viz. these, and the like coherent with them : that there is an eternal God, incomprehensibly powerful, wise, just, and good ; who is always present with us, and ever intent upon us ; viewing not only all our external actions (open and secret) but our inmost cogitations, desires, and intentions, by the which our actions are chiefly to be estimated : that he, as governor of the world, and judge of men, doth concern himself in all human affairs, disposing and managing all events according to his righteous pleasure ; exacting punctual obedience to his laws, and dispensing recompenses answerable thereto ; with impartial justice rewarding each man according to the purposes of his heart and the practices of his life ; that all our good and happiness doth absolutely depend on God's favour ; so that to please him can only be true wisdom, and to offend him the greatest folly ; that virtue is incomparably the best endowment whereof we are capable, and sin the worst mischief to which we are liable : that no worldly good or evil is considerable in comparison with good or evils spiritual : that nothing can be really profitable or advantageous to us, which doth not consist with our duty to God, doth not someways conduce to our spiritual interest and eternal welfare : yea,

that every thing not serviceable to those purposes is either a frivolous trifle, or a dangerous snare or a notable damage, or a woful bane to us : that content of mind, springing from innocence of life, from the faithful discharge of our duty, from satisfaction of conscience, from a good hope in regard to God and our future state, is in our esteem and choice much to be preferred, before all the delights which any temporal possession or fruition can afford : and, that a bad mind is the sorest adversity that can befall us. Such are the grounds of upright practice, more firm than any rock, more unshakeable than the foundations of heaven and earth ; the which are assured by the sacred Oracles, and attested by many remarkable providences ; have ever been avowed by the wiser sort, and admitted by the general consent of men, as for their truth, most agreeable to reason, and for their usefulness, approved by constant experience ; the belief of them having apparently most wholesome influence upon all the concerns of life, both public and private ; indeed, being absolutely needful for upholding government, and preserving human society ; no obligation, no faith or confidence between men, no friendship or peace being able to subsist without it. Whence the practice built on such foundations must be

very secure. And if God shall not cease to be, if he will not let go the reins, if his word cannot deceive, if the wisest men are not infatuated, if the common sense of mankind do not prove extravagant, if the main props of life and pillars of society do not fail ; he that walketh uprightly doth proceed on sure grounds.



THE UPRIGHT MAN.

WHAT is the conduct of the upright man ? He is clear, frank, candid, harmless, consistent in all his behaviour, his discourse, his dealing. His heart commonly may be seen in his face, his mind doth ever suit with his speech, his deeds have a just correspondence with his professions ; he never faileth to perform what he doth promise, and to satisfy the expectations which he hath raised.*

He doth not wrap himself in clouds, that none may see where he is, or know how to find him ; may discern what he is about, or whither he tendeth.

He disguiseth not his intents with fallaci-

* Prov. xiii. 5 ; Psal. xxxvi. 3, 4 ; xxxiv. 13 ; xv. 2.

ous pretences of conscience, of public good, of special friendship and respect.*

He doth use no disingenuous, spiteful, unjust tricks or sleights, to serve the present turn.

He layeth no baits or snares *to catch men*, alluring them into mischief or inconvenience.†

As he doth not affect any poor, bare ends, so he will not defile his fair intentions by sordid means of compassing them ; such as are illusive simulations and subdolous artifices, treacherous collusions, sly insinuations and sycophantic detractions, versatile whifflings and dodgings, flattering colloquings and glozings, servile crouchings and fawnings, and the like.

He hath little of the serpent (none of its lurking insidiousness, of its surprising violence, of its rancorous venom, of its keen mordacity), but much of the dove (all its simplicity, its gentleness, its fidelity, its in-

* Prov. x. 18.

† Jer. v. 26 ; (Psal. lxiv. 5 : lvi. 6 ; ix. 15 ; vii. 15 ; x. 2 ; lvii. 6 ; xxxv. 7 ; cxl. 5 ; Prov. xxvi. 27 ; Eccles. x. 8.)

‡ Psal. x. 7 ; lv. 21 ; lxiv. 6 ; x. 9, 10 ; vi. 5 ; Rom. xvi. 18 ; Eccles. xix. 25

nocence), in his conversation and commerce.*

His Wisdom is ever tempered with sincerity, and seasoned with humanity, with meekness, with charity; being *the wisdom which is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy*.†

Most businesses have wide gaps, all have some chinks, at which devotion may slip in. But we are never so urgently set or closely intent upon any work (be we feeding, be we traveling, be we trading, be we studying), nothing yet can forbid but that we may together wedge in a thought concerning God's goodness, and bolt forth a word of praise for it; but that we may reflect on our sins, and spend a penitential sigh on them; but that we may descry our need of God's help, and despatch a brief petition for it: a *God be praised*, a *Lord have mercy*, a *God bless*, or *God help me*, will nowise interrupt or disturb our proceedings.

As worldly cares and desires do often intrude and creep into our devotions, distract-

* 2 Sam. xv. 5; Prov. xi. 9; xvi. 25.

† James iii. 17.

ing and defiling them ; so may spiritual thoughts and holy affections insinuate themselves into, and hallow our secular transactions. This practice is very possible, and is no less expedient : for that if our employments be not thus seasoned, they can have no true life or saviour in them ; they will in themselves be dead and putrid, they will be foul and noisome, or at least flat and insipid unto us.

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THE VAIN BUSINESSES OF THE WORLD.

If we survey and prize all worldly businesses, which among them will appear so importunate as to demand, so greedy as to devour, so worthy at least as to deserve all our time, that we cannot spare a few minutes for maintaining our most pleasant intercourse, and most gainful commerce with Heaven ? What are the great businesses of the world ? What byscraping and scrambling for pelf, contriving and compassing designs of ambition, courting the favour and respect of men, making provisions for carnal pleasure, gratifying fond curiosity or vain humour ? And do any of these deserve to be put into the scale against, shall all of them together be

able to sway down, our spiritual employments? Shall these images, these shadows of business, supplant or crowd our devotion; that which procureth wealth inestimably precious, pleasure infinitely satisfactory, honour incomparably noble above all this world can afford? If the expense of time be, as the Philosopher said, *the most precious expense* that can be; how can it be better laid out than upon the worthiest things, such as devotion alone can afford the purchase and possession of? True virtue, sound wisdom, a quiet conscience, and steady tranquillity of mind, the love and favour of God, a title unto endless joy and bliss, are purely the gifts of heaven; and thence they will not descend of themselves, but prayer must fetch them down. If nothing, then, in the world be comparable to those things, how can any time be so well spent as in prayer, which acquireth them; which also best secureth whatever we have, and is the readiest way to procure whatever we want?

TIME SQUANDERED.

MOREOVER, if we reflect what vast portions of time we squander away upon petty matters, upon voluptuous enjoyments, upon fruit-

less pastimes, upon impertinent talk ; how can we satisfy ourselves in not allotting competent time for God's service, our own salvation, and the future everlasting state ; doth not he, who with the continuance of our life bestoweth on us all our time, deserve that a pittance of it should be reserved for himself ? Can all the world duly claim so great an allowance thereof ? May not our soul (which is far our noblest part, which indeed is all ourselves) justly challenge a good share of our time to be expended on it ? Must eternity, which comprehendeth all time, have no time belonging to it, or allotted for its concerns ?

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TIME WELL EMPLOYED.

In truth, attending upon devotion can be no obstacle, but will be great furtherance to all other good business. It is the most sure, most pleasant, most advantageous and compendious way of transacting affairs, to mix prayers and praises with them ; it is the best oil that can be, to make the wheels of action go on smoothly and speedily : it not only sanctifieth our undertakings, but much promoteth and exceedingly sweeteneth the ma-

nagement of them. For the conscience of having rendered unto God his due respect and service, of having entrusted our affairs to his care, of having consequently engaged his protection and assistance for us, will dispose us to do things with a courageous alacrity and comfortable satisfaction ; will fill us with a good hope of prospering ; will prepare us however to be satisfied with the event, whatever it shall be ; will in effect procure a blessing and happy success, such as we may truly rejoice and triumph in, as conferred by God in favour to us. Whereas, neglecting these duties, we can have no solid content of savoury complacence in anything we undertake : reflecting on such misbehaviour (if we be not downright infidels, or obdurate reprobates in impiety) will quash or damp our courage ; having thence forfeited all pretence to God's succour, and provoked him to cross us, we must needs suspect disappointment : as we have no reasonable ground to hope for success, so we cannot, if success arriveth, be heartily satisfied therein, or take it for a blessing.

He therefore that is such a niggard of his time, that he grudgeth to withhold any part thereof from his worldly occasions, deeming all time cast away that is laid out

in waiting upon God, is really most unthrifty and prodigal thereof: by not sparing a little, he wasteth all his time to no purpose; by so eagerly pursuing, he effectually setteth back his designs; by preposterously affecting to dispatch his affairs, he rendereth them endless, or, which is the same, altogether unprofitable.

In fine, we may be sure that no time is spent even so prudently and politically, with so great advantage and so real fruit to ourselves, as that which is employed upon devotion. In sacrificing his time, his pains, his substance, anything he hath or can do, to God's service, no man can be a loser.

SERMON.

OF THE DUTY OF THANKSGIVING.

Ephes. v. 20.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God.

GOD OUR BEST HELP.

WHEN we revolve in our minds (as we should often do) the favourable passages of Providence, that in the whole course of our lives have befallen us: how in our extreme poverty and distress (when perhaps no help

appearing, and all hopes seemed to fail us,) God hath raised us up friends who have commiserated, comforted, and succoured us ; and not only so, but hath changed our sorrowful condition into a state of joy ; hath (to use the Psalmist's expressions) *turned our mourning into dancing* ; hath *put off our sackcloth, and girded us with gladness* ; hath *considered our trouble, and known our soul in adversity* ; hath *set our feet in a large room,** and furnished us with plentiful means of subsistence ; how in the various changes, and adventures, and travels of our life, upon sea and land, at home and abroad, among friends, and strangers and enemies, he hath protected us from wants and dangers ; from devouring diseases, and the distemperatures of infectious air ; from the assaults of bloody thieves and barbarous pirates ; from the rage of fire, and fury of tempests ; from disastrous casualties ; from treacherous surprises ; from open mischiefs, that with a dreadful face approached and threatened our destruction ; then most opportunely should we with all thankful exultation of mind admire and celebrate *our strength, and our deliverer* ; our faithful *refuge in trouble, and the rock of our salvation.*

*Psal. xxxii, xxxi, vii, viii.

MOTIVES FOR PRAISING GOD:

OR, when we contemplate the wonderful works of nature, and, walking about at our leisure, gaze upon the ample theatre of the world, considering the stately beauty, constant order, and sumptuous furniture thereof; the glorious splendour and uniform motion of the heavens; the pleasant fertility of the earth; the curious figure and fragrant sweetness of plants; the exquisite frame of animals; and all other amazing miracles of nature, wherein the glorious attributes of God (especially his transcendent goodness), are most conspicuously displayed; (so that by them not only large acknowledgments, but even gratulatory hymns, as it were of praise, have been extorted from the mouths of Aristotle, Pliny, Galen, and such like men, never suspected guilty of an excessive devotion;) then should our hearts be affected with thankful sense, and our lips break forth into his praise.

Yea, from every object of sense, from every event of providence, from every common occurrence, we may extract fit matter of thanksgiving: as did our Saviour, when, considering the stupid infidelity of those proud people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and

Capernaum (who were not at all affected by his miraculous works, nor moved to repentance by his pathological discourses), and comparing it with the pious credulity of his meaner disciples, he brake forth into that divine ejaculation, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast concealed these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes.** saith the evangelical narration; *Upon that occasion Jesus thus spake:* he embraced that convenient opportunity of thankfully acknowledging God's wise and gracious dispensation. And frequent occasion is afforded us daily (were our minds suitably disposed), of doing the like.

We are to give thanks, not only for great and notable benefits, but for the least and most ordinary favours of God: though indeed none of God's favours are in themselves small and inconsiderable. Men are wont to bless themselves, if they receive but a transient glance from a prince's eye; a smile from a great personage; any slender intimation of regard from him that is in capacity to do them good. What is it, then, to receive the least testimony of His good

* Luke x. 21.

will, from whom alone every good thing can be expected ; upon whose disposal all happy successes of our wishes, our hopes, and our endeavours do entirely depend ! We repute him unjust, who withholds the least part of what is due from the true owner : and is not he ungrateful, then, that omits to render thanks for the least of divine mercies ?

*There is one glory of the sun, another of the moon, another of the stars,** saith St. Paul. Some works of God indeed excel in lustre ; yet all are glorious, all are to be discerned, all to be esteemed and thankfully entertained by us. The brightness of the one should not wholly obscure the other ; if it do, it argues the weakness of our sense, the dulness of our spiritual faculty. For every beam of light that delights our eye, for every breath of air that cheers our spirits, for every drop of pleasant liquor that cools our thirst, for every step we safely take, for the happy issue of the least undertaking, for escaping the vengeance due to an idle word or a wanton thought, we owe a hymn of praise to God.

* 1 Cor. xv. 41.

SERMON.

NOT TO OFFEND IN WORD AN EVIDENCE
OF A HIGH PITCH OF VIRTUE.

James iii, 2.

If any man offend not in word, he is a perfect man.

GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE.

To govern the tongue well is a matter of exceeding difficulty, requiring not only hearty goodness, but great judgment and art, together with much vigilance and circum-

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spection ; whence the doing it argues a high pitch of virtue. For since the tongue is a very loose and versatile engine, which the least breath of thought doth stir, and set on going any way, it cannot but need much attention to keep it either in a steady rest, or in a right motion. Since numberless swarms of things roving in the fancy, do thence incessantly obtrudethemselves upon the tongue, very much application of mind and great judgment are requisite to select out of them those few which are good and fit, rejecting all that is bad, and improper to be spoken. Since continually temptations occur provoking or alluring to miscarriage in this kind (for beside internal propension and commotions of soul, every object we behold, every company we are engaged in, every accident befalling us, doth suggest somewhat inviting thereto : the condition of our neighbour moving us, if high, to flatter—if low, to insult : our own fortune prompting, if prosperous, to boast—if cross to murmur ; any action drawing from us, if it pleaseth us, fond admiration—if it disliketh, harsh censure : since, I say, we are thus at every turn obnoxious to speak amiss), it must be matter of huge skill and caution, of mighty industry and resolution, to decline it. We,

for that purpose, need to imitate that earnest and watchful care of the holy Psalmist, which he thus expresseth : *I have* (saith he) *purposed that my mouth shall not offend :* and *I said* (saith he again) *I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue : I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.** And thus to maintain a constant guard over his heart and ways, thus in consequence thereof to curb and rule his speech well, must assuredly be the mark of a very good person. Especially considering, that,

Irregular speech hath commonly divers more advantages for it, and fewer checks upon it, than other bad practice hath. A man is apt, I mean, to speak ill with less dissatisfaction and regret from within ; he may do it with less control and less hazard from without, than he can act ill. Bad actions are gross and bulky, taking up much time, and having much force spent on them, whence men easily observe and consider them in themselves and others, but ill words are subtile and transient, soon born, and as soon diseased ; whence men rashly utter them without much heed before them,

* Psal. xvii. 3 ; xxxix. 1.

or much reflection after them. Bad actions have also usually visible effects immediately consequent on them : but words operate insensibly and at distance ; so that men hardly discern what will follow them, or what they have effected. There are also frequent occasions of speaking ill upon presumption of secrecy, and thence of indisturbance and impunity ; yea, doing so is often entertained with complacence, and encouraged with applause : the vilest abuses of speech (even blasphemy, treason, and slander themselves) may be safely whispered into ears which will receive them with pleasure and commendation. Bad language also in most cases is neither so strictly prohibited nor severely chastised by human laws, as a bad action is. Whence ordinarily the guilt of this misbehaviour seems little or none ; and persons much practising it, both in their own conceit, and in the opinion of others, do often pass for innocent. Men, indeed, here will hardly discern any rule, or acknowledge any obligation : the tongue, they deem, is free, and any words may be dispensed with : it is sufficient if they abstain from doing gross wrong or mischief, they have a right and liberty to say any thing. *Our lips are our own ; who is Lord over*

us? so are men commonly prone to say, with those in the Psalm. Hence whosoever notwithstanding such encouragements to offend herein, and so few restraints from it, doth yet carefully forbear it, governing his tongue according to rules of duty and reason, may justly be reputed a very good man. Farthermore.

Whereas most of the enormities, the mischiefs, and the troubles, whereby the souls of men are defiled, their minds discomposed, and their lives disquieted, are the fruits of ill-governed speech ; it being that chiefly, which perverteth justice, which soweth dissensions, which raiseth all bad passions and animosities, which embroileth the world in seditions and factions, by which men wrong and abuse, deceive and seduce, defame and disgrace one another, whereby consequently innumerable vexations and disturbances are created among men ; he that by well governing his speech preserveth himself from the guilt, disengageth his mind and life from the inconveniences of all such evils (from the discreet and honest management thereof, enjoying both innocence and peace), must necessarily be, as a very wise and happy, so a very good and worthy person.

* Psal. xii. 4.

SERMON.

AGAINST FOOLISH TALKING
AND JESTING.

Ephes. v. 4.

Nor foolish talking nor jesting which are not convenient.

CHEERFUL CONVERSATION
INCULCATED.

It would surely be hard, that we should be tied ever to knit the brow and squeeze the brain (to be always sadly dumpish, or seriously pensive), that all divertisement of mirth and pleasantness should be shut out

of conversation: and how can we better relieve our minds, or relax our thoughts, how can we be more ingenuously cheerful, in what more kindly way can we exhilarate ourselves and others, than by thus *sacrificing to the graces*, as the ancients called it? Are not some persons always, and all persons sometimes, incapable otherwise to divert themselves, than by such discourse? Shall we, I say, have no recreation? or must our recreations be ever clownish or childish, consisting merely in rustical efforts, or in petty sleights of bodily strength and activity? Were we, in fine, obliged ever to talk like philosophers, assigning dry reasons for every thing, and dropping grave sentences upon all occasions, would it not much deaden human life, and make ordinary conversation exceedingly to languish? Facetiousness, therefore, in such cases, and to such purposes, may be allowable.



EVIL JESTING.

THE reputation of men is too noble a sacrifice to be offered up to vain glory, fond pleasure, or ill-humour; it is a good far too

dear and precious, than to be prostituted for idle sport and divertissement. It becometh us not to trifle with that, which in common estimation is of so great moment ; to play rudely with a thing so very brittle, yet of so vast price ; which being once broken or racked, it is very hard, and scarce possible, to repair. A small transient pleasure, a tickling the ears, wagging the lungs, forming the face into a smile, a giggle, or a hum, are not to be purchased with a grievous distaste and smart, perhaps with the real damage and mischief of our neighbour, which attend upon contempt. This is not jesting surely, but bad earnest is wild mirth, which is the mother of grief to those whom we should tenderly love ; it is unnatural sport, which breedeth displeasure in them whose delight it should promote, whose liking it should procure : it crosseth the nature and design of this way of speaking ; which is to cement and ingratiate society, to render conversation pleasant and sprightly, for mutual satisfaction and comfort.

In fine, no jesting is allowable, which is not thoroughly innocent : it is an unworthy perverting of wit to employ it in biting and scratching ; or working prejudice to any

man's reputation or interest ; in needlessly incensing any man's anger or sorrow ; in raising animosities, dissensions, and feuds among any.

SERMON.

OF EVIL SPEAKING IN GENERAL.

Titus iii. 2.

To speak evil of no man.

EVILS OF HARSH SPEAKING.

WE should so rebuke those who, by frailty or folly incident to mankind, have fallen into misdemeanours, that they may perceive we do sincerely pity their ill case, and tender their good; that we mean not to up-

braid their weakness, or insult upon their misfortune ; that we delight not to inflict on them more grief than is plainly needful and unavoidable : that we are conscious and sensible of our own obnoxiousness to the like slips or falls, and do *consider that we also may be tempted*, and being tempted may be overborne. This they cannot perceive, or be persuaded of, except we temper our speech with benignity and mildness. Such speech prudence also dictateth, as most useful and hopeful for producing the good ends honest reprehension doth aim at ; it mollifieth and it melteth a stubborn heart, it subdueth and winneth a perverse will, it healeth distempered affections. Whereas roughly handling is apt to defeat or obstruct the cure ; rubbing the sore doth tend to exasperate and inflame it. Harsh speech rendereth advice odious and unsavoury ; driveth from it and depriveth it of efficacy : it turneth regret for a fault into displeasure and disdain against the reprover : it looks not like the dealing of a kind friend, but like the persecution of a spiteful enemy ; it seemeth rather an ebullition of gall, or a defluxion from rancour, than an expression of good will : the offender will take it for a needless and pitiless tormenting, or for a

proud and tyrannical domineering over him. He that can bear a friendly touch, will not endure to be lashed with angry and reproachful words. In fine, all reproof ought to be seasoned with discretion, with candour, with moderation and meekness.



IMPRUDENCE OF ABUSIVE LANGUAGE.

BUT it is plainly a very preposterous method of instructing, of deciding controversies, of begetting peace, to vex and anger those concerned, by ill language. Nothing surely doth more hinder the efficacy of discourse, and prevent conviction, than doth this course, upon many obvious accounts. It doth first put in a strong bar to attention : for no man willingly doth afford an ear to him, whom he conceiveth disaffected toward him ; which opinion harsh words infallibly will produce : no man can expect to hear truth from him, whom he apprehendeth disordered in his mind, whom he seeth rude in his proceedings, whom he taketh to be unujst in his dealing ; as men will certainly take those to be, who presume to revile others for using their own judgment freely, and dissenting

from them in opinion. Again, this course doth blind the hearer's mind, so that he cannot discern what he that pretends to instruct him doth mean, or how he doth assert his doctrine. Truth will not be discerned through the smoke of wrathful expressions; right being defaced by foul language will not appear; passion being excited will not suffer a man to perceive the sense, or the force of an argument. The will also thereby is hardened and hindered from submitting to truth, In such a case, *non persuadebis, etiamsi persuaseris*: although you stop his mouth, you cannot subdue his heart; although he can no longer fight, yet never will he yield: animosity raised by such usage rendereth him invincibly obstinate in his conceits and courses. Briefly, from this proceeding men become unwilling to mark, unfit to apprehend, indisposed to embrace, any good instruction or advice: it maketh them indocile and intractable, averse from better instruction, pertacious in their opinions, and refractory in their ways.

Every man (saith the wise man) *shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer*; but no man surely will be ready to kiss those lips which are embittered with reproach, or defiled with dirty language.

It is said of Pericles, that *with thunder and lightning he put Greece into confusion*: such discourse may serve to confound things, it seldom tendeth to compose them. If reason will not pierce, rage will scarce avail to drive it in. Satirical virulency may vex men sorely, but it hardly ever soundly converts them *Few become wiser or better by ill words*. Children may be frightened into compliance by loud and severe increpations; but men are to be allured by rational persuasion, backed with courteous usage: they may be sweetly drawn, they cannot be violently driven to change their judgment and practice. Whence that advice of the Apostle, *With meekness instruct those that oppose themselves*, doth no less savour of wisdom than of goodness.

We should never speak ill of any man beyond measure: be the cause never so just, the occasion never so necessary, we should nowise be immoderate therein, exceeding the bounds prescribed by truth, equity, and humanity. We should never speak worse of any man whatever than he certainly deserveth according to the most favourable construction of his doings; never more than the cause absolutely requireth. We should rather be careful to fall short of what in

rigorous truth might be said against him, than in the least to pass beyond it. The best cause had better seem to suffer a little by our reservedness in its defence, than any man be wronged by aspersing him ; for God, the patron of truth and right, is ever able to secure them without the succour of our unjust and uncharitable dealing. The contrary practice hath indeed within it a spice of slander, that is, of the worst iniquity.

Neither should we ever use reproach as a means of compassing any design we do effect or aim at : it is an unwarrantable engine of raising us to wealth, dignity, or repute. To grow by the diminution, to rise by the depression, to shine by the eclipse of others, to build a fortune upon the ruins of our neighbour's reputation, is that which no honourable mind can affect, no honest man will endeavour. Our own wit, courage, and industry, managed with God's assistance and blessing, are sufficient, and only lawful instruments of prosecuting honest enterprises : we need not, we must not, instead of them, employ our neighbour's disgrace ; no worldly good is worth purchasing at such a rate, no project worth achieving by such foul ways.

Nor out of negligence and inadvertency

should we sputter out reproachful speech ; shooting ill words at rovers, or not regarding who stands in our way. Among all temerities this is one of the most noxious, and therefore very culpable.

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MILD LANGUAGE INCULCATED.

INDEED, so far from bitter or sour our language should be, that it ought to be sweet and pleasant ; so far from rough and harsh, that it should be courteous and obliging ; so far from signifying wrath, ill-will, contempt, or animosity, that it should express tender affection, good esteem, sincere respect toward our brethren ; and be apt to produce the like in them towards us ; the sense of them should be grateful to the heart : the very sound and accent of them should be delightful to the ear. *Every one should please his neighbour for his good to edification.* Our words should *always be with grace seasoned with salt* ; they should have the grace of courtesy, they should be seasoned with the salt of discretion, so as to be sweet and savoury to the hearers. Commonly ill language is a certain sign of inward

enmity and ill-will. Good-will is wont to show itself in good terms ; it clotheth even its grief handsomely, and its displeasure carrieth favour in its face ; its rigour is civil and gentle, tempered with pity for the faults and errors which it disliketh, with the desire of their amendment and recovery whom it reprehendeth. It would inflict no more evil than is necessary ; it would cure its neighbour's disease without exasperating his patience, troubling his modesty, or impairing his credit. As it always judgeth candidly, so it never condemneth extremely.

SERMON.

THE FOLLY OF SLANDER.

Prov. x. 18.

He that uttereth slander is a fool.

PERVERSION OF SPEECH.

LASTLY we may consider that it is a grievous perverting the design of speech (that excellent faculty, which so much distinguisheth us from, so highly advanceth us above, other creatures), to use it to the defaming

and disquieting our neighbour. It was given us as an instrument of beneficial commerce, and delectable conversation ; that with it we might assist and advise, might cheer and comfort one another : we therefore, in employing it to the disgrace, vexation damage or prejudice in any kind, of our neighbour, do foully abuse it ; and so doing, render ourselves indeed worse than dumb beasts : for better far it were that we could say nothing than that we should speak ill.



THE MALICE OF SOCIETY.

If we do mark what is done in many (might I not say, in most) companies, what is it, but one telling malicious stories of, or fastening odious characters upon, another ? What do men commonly amuse themselves in so much, as in carping, and harshly censuring, in defaming and abusing their neighbours ? Is it not the sport and divertissement of many, to cast dirt in the faces of all they meet with ; to bespatter any man with foul imputations ? Doth not in every corner a Momus lurk, from the venom of whose

spiteful or petulant tongue no eminency of rank, no dignity of place, or sacredness of office, no innocence or integrity of life, no wisdom or circumspection of behaviour, no good nature, or benignity in dealing and carriage, can protect any person? Do not men assume to themselves the liberty of telling romances, and framing characters concerning their neighbour, as freely as a poet doth about Hector or Turnus, Thersites or Draucus? Do not they usurp a power of playing with, of tossing about, of tearing in pieces their neighbour's good name, as if it were the veriest toy in the world? Do not many, *having a form of godliness* (some of them demurely, others confidently, both without any sense of, or remorse for what they do) backbite their brethren? Is it not grown so common a thing to asperse carelessly, that no man wonders at it, that few dislike it, that scarce any detest it? that most notorious calumniators are heard, yea, are even held in vogue and reverence, as men of a notable talent, and very serviceable to their party? so that slander seemeth to have lost its nature, and not to be now a grievous sin, but a fashionable humour, a way of pleasing entertainment, a fine knack, or curious feat of policy; so that no man at least taketh

himself or others to be accountable for what is said in this way. Is not, in fine, the case become such, that whoever hath in him any love of truth, any sense of justice or honesty, any spark of charity toward his brethren, shall hardly be able to satisfy himself in the conversations he meeteth ; but will be tempted, with the holy Prophet, to wish ourselves sequestered from society. and cast into solitude ; repeating those words of his, *Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men ; that I might leave my people, and go from them : for they are —an assembly of treacherous men, and they bend their tongues, like their bow, to lies ?* This he wished in an age so resembling ours, that I fear the description with equal patness may suit both : *Take ye heed* (said he then ; and may we not advise the like now ?) *every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother ; for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. They will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth ; they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.*

THE SLANDERER,

Whoever indeed pronounceth concerning

his neighbour's intentions otherwise than they are evidently expressed by words, or signified by overt actions, is a slanderer ; because he pretendeth to know, and dareth to aver, that which he noways possibly can tell whether it be true ; because the heart is exempt from all jurisdiction here, is only subject to the government and trial of another world ; because no man can judge of the truth of such accusations ; because no man can exempt or defend himself from them : so that apparently such practice doth thwart all course of justice and equity.



THE ABETTERS OF SLANDER.

ANOTHER practice (worthily bearing the guilt of slander) is, being aiding and accessory thereto, by any-wise furthering, cherishing or abetting it. He that by crafty significations of ill-will doth prompt the slanderer to vent his poison ; he that by a willing audience and attention doth readily suck it up, or who-greedily swalloweth it down by credulous approbation and assent ; he that pleasantly relisheth and smacketh at it, or expresseth a delightful complacence therein ;

as he is a partner in the fact, so he is a sharer in the guilt. There are not only slanderous throats, but slanderous ears also ; not only wicked inventions, which engender and brood lies, but wicked assents, which hatch and foster them. Not only the spiteful mother which conceiveth such spurious brats, but the midwife that helpeth to bring them forth, the nurse that feedeth them, the guardian that traineth them up to maturity, and setteth them forth to live in the world ; as they do really contribute to their subsistence, so deservedly they partake in the blame due to them, and must be responsible for the mischief they do. For indeed, were it not for such free entertainers, such nourishers, such encouragers of them, slanders commonly die in the womb, or prove still-born, or presently entering into the cold air would expire, or for want of nourishment soon would starve. It is such friends and patrons of them who are the causes that they are so rife ; they it is who set ill-natured, base, and designing people upon devising, searching after, and picking up malicious and idle stories. Were it for such customers, the trade of calumniating would fall. Many pursue it merely out of servility and flattery, to tickle the ears, to soothe the humour, to

gratify the malignant disposition or ill-will of others ; who upon the least discouragement would give over the practice. If, therefore, we would exempt ourselves from all guilt of slander, we must not only abstain from venting it, but forbear to regard or countenance it : for *He is* (saith the wise man) *a wicked doer, who giveth heed to false lips ; and a liar, who giveth ear to a naughty tongue.* Yea, if we thoroughly would be clear from it, we must shew an aversion from hearing it ; an unwillingness to believe it ; an indignation against it ; so either stifling it in the birth, or condemning it to death being uttered. This is the sure way of destroying it, and to prevent its mischief, If we would stop our ears, we should stop the slanderer's mouth ; if we would *resist the calumniator, He would fly from us* ; if we would reprove him, we should repel him. For, as *the north wind driveth away rain, so* (the wise man telleth us) *doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*



IMPRUDENT SPEAKING.

Another way of slandering is, impetuous

or negligent sputtering out of words, without minding what truth or consequence there is in them, how they may touch or hurt our neighbour. To avoid this sin, we must not only be free from intending mischief, but wary of effecting it; not only careful of not wronging one distinct person, but of harming any promiscuously; not only abstinent from aiming directly, but provident not to hit casually any person with obloquy. For as he that dischargeth shot into a crowd, or so as not to look about regarding who may stand in the way, is no less guilty of doing mischief, and bound to make satisfaction to them he woundeth, than if he had aimed at some one person: so if we fling our bad words at random, which may light unluckily, and defame somebody, we become slanderers unawares, and before we think on it. This practice hath not ever all the malice of the worst slander, but it worketh often the effects thereof, and therefore doth incur its guilt and its punishment; especially it being commonly derived from ill-temper, or from bad habit, which we are bound to watch over, to curb, and to correct. The tongue is a sharp and parlous weapon, which we are bound to keep upon the sheath, or never to draw forth but ad-

visedly, and upon just occasion ; it must ever be wielded with caution and care : to brandish it wantonly, to lay about with it blindly and furiously, to slash and smite therewith any that happeneth to come in our way, doth argue malice or madness.



SLANDER THE GREATEST OF INJURIES.

THE slanderer may indeed, perhaps conceive it no great matter that he committeth ; because he doth not act in so boisterous and bloody a way, but only by words, which are subtile, slim, and transient things ; upon his neighbour's credit only, which is no substantial or visible matter. He draweth, thinks he, no blood, nor breaketh any bones, nor impresseth any remarkable scar : 'tis only the soft air he breaketh with his tongue ; 'tis only a slight character that he stampeth on the fancy, 'tis only an imaginary stain that he daubeth his neighbour with : therefore he supposeth no great wrong done, and seemeth to himself innocent, or very excusable. But these conceits arise from great inconsiderateness, or mistake ; nor can they excuse the slanderer from grievous injustice. For in dealing with our neighbour,

and meddling with his property, we are not to value things according to our fancy, but according to the price set on them by the owner: we must not reckon that a trifle, which he prizeth as a jewel. Since then all men (especially men of honour and honesty) do, from a necessary instinct of nature, estimate their good name beyond any of their goods, yea, do commonly hold it more dear and precious than their very lives; we, by violently or fraudulently bereaving them of it, do them no less wrong, than if we should rob or cozen them of their substance, yea, than if we should maim their body, or spill their blood, or even stop their breath. If they as grievously feel it, and resent it as deeply, as they do any other outrage, the injury is really as great to them. Even the slanderer's own judgment and conscience might tell him so much: for they who most slight another's fame, are usually very tender of their own, and can with no patience endure that others should touch it: which demonstrates the inconsiderateness of their judgment, and the iniquity of their practice. It is an injustice not to be corrected or cured. Thefts may be restored, wounds may be cured; but there is no restitution or cure of

a lost good name : it is therefore an irreparable injury.

FALSE EXCUSES OF SLANDER.

BUT it is not, perhaps he will pretend, for to assuage a private passion, or to promote his particular concernment, that he makes so bold with his neighbour, or deals so harshly with him ; but for the sake of orthodox doctrine, for advantage of the true church, for the advancement of public good, he judgeth it expedient to asperse him. This indeed is the covert of innumerable slanders : zeal for some opinion, or some party, beareth out men of sectarian and factious spirits in such practices ; they may do, they may say, anything for those fine ends. What is a little truth, what is any man's reputation, in comparison to the carrying on such brave designs ? But (to omit that men do usually prevaricate in these cases ; that it is not commonly for love of truth, but of themselves, not so much for the benefit of their sect, but for their own interest, that they calumniate) this plea will nowise justify such practice. For truth and sincerity, equity and candour, meekness and charity are inviolably to be observed, not only toward dissenters in opinion, but even

toward declared enemies of truth itself ; we are to *bless them* (that is, to speak well of them, and to wish well to them) *not to curse them* (that is, not to reproach them, or to wish them ill, much less to belie them.) Truth, also, as it cannot ever need, so doth it always loathe and scorn the patronage and the succour of lies ; it is able to support and protect itself by fair means ; it will not be killed upon a pretence of saving it, or thrive by its own ruin. Nor indeed can any party be so much strengthened and underpropt, as it will be weakened and undermined, by such courses : no cause can stand firm upon a bottom so loose and slippery, as falsehood is ; all the good a slanderer can do is to disparage what he would maintain. In truth, no heresy can be worse than that would be, which should allow to play the devil in any case. He that can dispense with himself to slander a Jew or a Turk, doth in so doing render himself worse than either of them by profession are : for even they, and even pagans themselves disallow the practice of inhumanity and iniquity. All men by light of nature avow truth to be honourable, and faith to be indispensably observed. He doth not understand what is to be Christian, or careth not to practise according

thereto, who can find in his heart, in any case, upon any pretence, to calumniate. In fine, to prostitute our conscience, or sacrifice our honesty, for any cause, to any interest whatever, can never be warrantable or wise.

SERMON.

AGAINST DETRACTION:

James iv. 11.

Speak not evil one of another brethren.

THE DETRATOR.

THE detractor doth imperfectly characterize persons, so as studiously to veil or faintly to disclose their virtues and good qualities, but carefully to expose, and fully to aggravate or amplify any defects or failings in them.

The detractor will pretend to give a character of his neighbour ; but in so doing he stiflenth what may commend him, and blazoneth what may disgrace him ; like an envious painter he hideth, or in dusky colours shadoweth, all the graceful parts and goodly features, but setteth out all blemishes in the briskest light, and most open view. Every face hath in it some mole, spot, or wrinkle ; there is no man that hath not, as they speak, some blind place, some blemishes in his nature or temper, some faults contracted by education or custom, somewhat amiss proceeding from ignorance, or misapprehension of things : these (although they be in themselves small and inconsiderable, although they are some of them involuntary, and thence inculpable, although they be much corrected or restrained by virtuous discipline, although they are compensated by greater virtues, yet these) the detractor snatcheth, mouldeth, and out of them frameth an idea of his neighbour, apt to breed hatred or contempt of him in an unwary spectator ; whereas were charity, were equity, were humanity, to draw the person, it, representing his qualities with just advantage, would render him lovely and venerable.

THE DETRACTOR ALWAYS AN UN-
WORTHY PERSON.

A MAN that is conscious to himself of a solid worth and virtue, of having honest intentions, of having performed good deeds, is satisfied with the fruits of inward comfort and outward approbation, which they do yield ; he therefore will scorn to seek the bettering himself by the discredit of others ; he will not by so mean a practice adulterate that worth, in which he feeleth sufficient complacence ; he rather doth like that others should enjoy their due commendation, as justifying his own claim thereto ; he willingly payeth it, because he may justly demand it ; and because withholding it from another may prejudice his own right thereto : but he that is sensible of no good qualities in himself, that is conscious of no worthy actions that he hath done, to breed a satisfaction of mind, or build a reputation upon, would please himself in making others as little better than himself as he can, would ground a kind of credit upon the ruins and rubbish of another's fame. When he knoweth that he cannot shine by his own light, he would seem less obscure by eclipsing the brightness of others, and shutting out the day from about him ; conceiving

that all things look alike in the dark, and that bad appeareth not bad where no good is near.



GENEROSITY AND DETRACTION CONTRASTED.

DETRACTION involveth degenerous baseness, meanness of spirit, and want of good manners, All men affect to seem generous, and will say they scorn to be base ; but generosity is in nothing more seen, than in a candid estimation of other men's virtues and good qualities : to this generosity of nature, generosity of education, generosity of principles and judgment, do all conspiringly dispose : it is the noblest kind of courtesy, to tender and further the reputation of others ; to be liberal in bestowing commendations on deserving persons ; it obligeth men more than any other benefit can do, procuring them commonly real advantage, always cheering and satisfying their mind ; for in nothing more do they please themselves, than in reaping this fruit of their good intention and honest industry, the approbation of worthy men ; it is therefore a most genteel

thing thus to oblige men. But, on the other side, nothing more plainly argueth a degenerate and ignoble heart, ill-breeding and ill-formed manners, a sorry mind and poor judgment, than to disesteem or disparage worth and virtue in others : it is the most savage rudeness, the most sordid illiberality, the most ugly clownishness, that can be ; of all men, therefore, it most doth misbecome those who pretend to be gentlemen.

SERMON.

OF QUIETNESS AND DOING OUR OWN
BUSINESS.

1 Thess. iv. ii.

And that ye study to be quiet and to do your own
business.

IMPERTINENT TALKING.

We should be careful of intrenching upon any man's modesty in any way, either of commendation or dispraise, so as to put him to the blush, or to expose him unto scorn. Sober men care not to be the subjects of talk ; we should not therefore thrust any man upon the stage ; it is vexatious, and

therefore always discourteous, sometimes very injurious.

It is good to be very staunch and cautious of talking about other men and their concerns, in way of passing characters on them, or descanting upon their proceedings for want of other discourse ; this is the common refuge of idleness, and the practice of fiddling gossips, who, because they will do nothing themselves, must be reflecting upon the doings of others ; and that they may not say nothing, will talk impertinently : St. Paul well coupleth together frivolous *tattlers* and *busybodies* ; and *withal* (saith he of such gossiping women, 1 Tim. v. 13) *they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house ; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.* To affect talking about others is indeed a great temptation to speaking things which we ought not to speak, words of unjust and uncharitable obloquy.



IDLE CURIOSITY.

We should not pry or peep into other

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men's secrets ; it is a practice upon many accounts blameable.

It is commonly impertinent curiosity ; for men hide things, because they do not think others concerned to know them : the concealment argueth their opinion to be such, and consequently that he is fondly curious who would search into them : *Why* (said he well to one, who, seeing him carry a basket covered, did ask what was in it) *dost thou seek to know, when thou seest it covered, that thou mayst not know.*

A wise man would not willingly anywise know the secrets of others but gladly would shun them, although offering themselves to his knowledge ; that he may be freed from the burden of keeping them, and the danger of venting them, to the distaste, wrong, or prejudice of others : and he is commended for his discretion, who to a prince asking him, *What of his he should impart to him?* replied, *Whatever you please, except your secrets.* Them he well thought unsafe to keep, and dangerous to utter. How foolish, then, is it voluntarily to intrude, or carefully to search into them !

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OBSTINACY IN ADVISING.

Be not obstinate in pressing advice : if he that asketh thy counsel do not like it, desist from urging further, and rest content. If thou hast performed the part of a faithful friend, of a good man, of a charitable Christian, in advising what seemeth best to thee, that may abundantly satisfy thee : for the rest, *ipse viderit*, it is his concernment more than thine : if thou pretendest that he must follow thy advice, or art displeased because he doth not so, thou makest thyself a commander, not a counsellor ; the which to appoint thee was beside his intention ; he meant to seek thy help ; not to forfeit his own liberty ; and thou art not just in pretending to so much.

REPROOF OF SLIGHT MATTERS TO BE
AVOIDED.

REPROVE not for slight matters ; for such faults or defects as proceed from natural frailty, from inadvertency, from mistake in matters of small consequence ; for it is hard to be just in such reproof, or so to temper

it as not to exceed the measure of blame due to such faults : they occur so often, that we should never cease to be carping, if we do it upon such occasions ; it is not worth the while, it is not handsome, to seem displeased with such little things ; it is spending our artillery upon a game not worth the killing. Reproof is too grave and stately a thing to be prostituted upon so mean things ; to use it upon small cause, derogateth from its weight when there is considerable reason for it ; friendship, charity, and humanity, should cover such offences. In fine, it is unseemly to reprove men for such things as all men, as themselves, are so continually subject unto : it is therefore better to let such things pass without any mark of displeasure or dislike.



MILD REPROOF THE BEST.

REPROVE mildly and sweetly, in the calmest manner, in the gentlest terms ; not in a haughty or imperious way, not hastily or fiercely ; not with sour looks, or in bitter language ; for these ways do beget all the evil, and hinder the best effects of reproof :

they do certainly inflame and disturb the person reprov'd ; they breed wrath, disdain, and hatred against the reprover ; but do not so well enlighten the man to see his error, or affect him with kindly sense of his miscarriage, or dispose him to correct his fault : such reproofs look rather like the wounds and persecutions of enmity, than as remedies ministered by a friendly hand ; they harden men with stomach and scorn to mend upon such occasion. If reproof doth not savour of humanity, it signifieth nothing ; it must be like a bitter pill wrapped in gold, and tempered with sugar, otherwise it will not go down, or work effectually.



THE QUIET MAN AND THE BUSY- BODY CONTRASTED.

QUIETNESS, to the person endued with it, or practising it, begetteth tranquillity and peace ; for he that letteth others alone, and cometh in no man's way, no man will be apt to disquiet or cross him ; he keepeth himself out of broils and factions ; but the busybody createth vexation and trouble to himself : others

will be ready to molest him in his proceedings, because he disturbeth them in theirs : he that will have a sickle in another's corn, or an oar in every man's boat, no wonder if his fingers be rapped ; men do not more naturally brush off flies, which buzz about their ears, sit upon their faces or hands, and sting or tickle them, than they strive to drive away clamorous and encroaching busybodies. *Let* (saith St. Peter) *none of you suffer as a busybody in other men's matters* ; it is, he intimateth, a practice whereby a man becometh liable to suffer, or which men are apt to punish soundly : and so the Wise Man implying the fondness and danger of it, *He* (saith he) *that passeth by, and meddleth with strife not belonging to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears*, that is, without any probable good effect, he provoketh a creature that will snarl at him and bite him.

Quietness is a decent and lovely thing, as signifying good disposition, and producing good effects ; but pragmatICALness is ugly and odious. Every man gladly would be a neighbour to a quiet person, as who by the steady calmness and smoothness of his humour, the inoffensive stillness and sweetness of his demeanour, doth afford all the pleasure of conversation ; without any cross or trouble.

But no man willingly would dwell by him, who is apt ever to be infesting him by his turbulent humour, his obstreperous talk, his tumultuous and furious carriage ; who, upon all occasions, without invitation or consent, will be thrusting in his eyes, his tongue, his hand ; prying into all that is done, dictating this or that course, taxing all proceeding, usurping a kind of jurisdiction over him and his actions : no man will like or can endure such a neighbour. It is commonly observed, that pride is not only abominable to God, but loathsome to man ; and of all prides, this is the most offensive and odious : for the pride which keepeth at home, within a man's heart or fancy, not issuing forth to trouble others, may indeed well be despised, as hugely silly and vain ; but that which breaketh out to the disturbance and vexation of others, is hated as molestful and mischievous.

Quietness adorneth any profession, bringing credit, respect, and love thereto ; but pragmatism is scandalous, and procureth odium to any party or cause : men usually do cloak their pragmatism with pretences of zeal for the public good, or of kindness to some party which they have espoused ; but thereby they do really cast reproach, and draw prejudice upon their

side : if it be a good cause, they do thereby wrong it, making it to partake of the blame incident to such carriage, as if it did produce or allow disorder ; if it be a bad cause, they wrong themselves. aggravating the guilt of their adherence thereto ; for it is a less fault to be calm and remiss in an ill way, than busy and violent in promoting it. Nothing hath wrought more prejudice to religion, or hath brought more disparagement upon truth, than boisterous and unseasonable zeal : pretending in ways of passion, of fierceness, of rudeness to advance them, a quiet sectary doth to most men's fancy appear more lovely, than he that is furiously and factiously orthodox : the ornament of *a meek and quiet spirit* is (saith St. Peter) *in God's sight, of great price* ; and it is also very estimable in the opinion of men.



A MAN'S OWN BUSINESS SUFFICIENT TO EMPLOY HIM.

WE may also consider, that every man hath business of his own sufficient to employ him ; to exercise his mind, to exhaust his care and

pains, to take up all his time and leisure. To study his own near concernments, to provide for the necessities and conveniences of his life, to look to the interests of his soul, to be diligent in his calling to discharge faithfully, all his duties relating to God and man, will abundantly employ a man ; well it is, if some of them do not encumber and distract him : he that will set himself with all his might to perform these things, will find enough to do ; he need not seek further for work ; he need not draw more trouble on him.

Seeing, then, every man hath burden enough upon his shoulders, imposed by God and nature, it is vain to take on him more load, by engaging himself in the affairs of others ; he will thence be forced, either to shake off his own business, or to become overburdened and oppressed with more than he can bear. It is indeed hence observable, and it needs must happen, that those who meddle with the business of others are wont to neglect their own ; they that are much abroad can seldom be at home ; they that know others most are least acquainted with themselves : and the wise Hebrew, *The wisdom of a learned man comes by opportunity of leisure : and he that hath little business shall be wise.* Whence it is scarcely possi-

ble that a pragmatical man should be a good man ; that is, such an one who honestly and carefully performeth the duties incumbent upon him.



WORTHY EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

NATURE offereth herself, and her inexhaustible store of appearances, to our contemplation ; we may, without any harm, and with much delight, survey her rich varieties, examine her proceedings, pierce into her secrets. Every kind of animals, of plants, of minerals, of meteors, presenteth matter, wherewith innocently, pleasantly, and profitably to entertain our minds. There are many noble sciences, by applying our minds to the study whereof, we may not only divert them, but improve and cultivate them : the histories of ages past, or relations concerning foreign countries, wherein the manners of men are described, and their actions reported, may afford us useful pleasure and pastime ; thereby we may learn as much, and understand the world as well, as by the most curious inquiry into the present actions of men ; there we may observe, we may scan, we may

tax the proceedings of whom we please, without any danger or offence : there are extant numberless books, wherein the wisest and most ingenious of men have laid open their hearts, and exposed their most secret cogitations unto us ; in pursuing them we may sufficiently busy ourselves, and let our idle hours pass gratefully ; we may meddle with ourselves, studying our own dispositions, examining our principles and purposes, reflecting on our thoughts, words, and actions ; striving thoroughly to understand ourselves ; to do this we have an unquestionable right, and by it we shall obtain vast benefit, much greater than we can hope to get by puddering in the designs or doings of others. Pragmaticalness, then, as it is very dangerous and troublesome, so it is perfectly needless ; it is a kind of idleness, but of all idleness the most unreasonable : it is at least worse than idleness, in St. Gregory Nazianzen's opinion. For, *I had rather (said he) be idle more than I should, than over-busy.*

SERMON.

OF THE LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.

Matth. xxii. 39.

And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

THE SACRIFICES MADE BY CHRIST.

DID not the Lord himself in our nature exemplify this duty, yea by his practice far outdo his precept? For, he who from the brightest glories, from the immense riches, from the ineffable joys and felicities of his celestial kingdom, did willingly stoop down to assume the garb of a servant, to be clothed with the infirmities of flesh, to become a *man of sorrow and acquainted with grief*; he who for our sake vouchsafed to live in extreme penury and disgrace, to feel hard

want, sore travail, bitter persecution, most grievous shame and anguish ; he who not only did contentedly bear, but purposely did chose to be accused, to be slandered, to be reviled, to be mocked, to be tortured, to pour forth his heart-blood upon a cross, for the sake of an unprofitable, an unworthy, an impious, an ingrateful generation ; for the salvation of his open enemies, of base apostates, of perverse rebels, of villanous traitors ; he who, in the height of his mortal agonies, did sue for the pardon of his cruel murderers ; who did send his apostles to them, did cause so many wenders to be done before them, did furnish all means requisite to convert and save them : he that acted and suffered all this, and more than can be expressed, with perfect frankness and goodwill ; did he not signally love his neighbour as himself, to the utmost measures did not in him virtue conquer nature, and charity triumph over self-love ? This he did to seal and impress his doctrine ; to show us what we should do, and what we can do by his grace ; to oblige us and to encourage us unto a conformity with him in this respect ; for, *Walk in love*, saith the apostle, *as Christ hath also loved us, and hath given himself for us* ; and, *This* (saith he himself) *is my*

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commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you : and how can I better conclude, than in the recommendation of such an example ?

SERMON.

THE NATURE, PROPERTIES AND ACT FOR
CHARITY.

Ephes. v. 2.

And walk in love.

JUST APPRECIATION OF OUR
NEIGHBOUR.

WE may consider that the common things, both good and bad, wherein men agree, are far more considerable than the peculiar things wherein they differ : to be a man, is much beyond being a lord, or a wit, or a philosopher ; to be a Christian, doth infinitely surpass being an emperor, or a learned clerk ; to be a sinner, is much worse than to be a beggar, or an idiot. The agreement of men is in the substance and body of things ; the

difference is in a circumstance, a fringe, or a shadow about them ; so that we cannot despise another man, without reflecting contempt, on ourselves, who are so very like him, and not considerably better than he, or hardly can without arrogance pretend to be so.

We may, therefore, and reason doth require, that we should value our neighbour ; and it is no impossible or unreasonable precept which St. Peter giveth us, to *honour all men* ; and with it a charitable man will easily comply : it ever will descry something valuable, something honourable, something amiable in our neighbour ; it will find somewhat of dignity in the meanest, somewhat of worth in the basest, somewhat hopeful in the most degenerate of men ; it therefore will not absolutely slight or scorn any man whatever, looking on him as an abject or forlorn wretch, unworthy of consideration.



CHARITY OF GOD.

This is that charity, which God himself, in a wonderful and incomprehensible manner, doth exemplify to us : for he is *the Father*

of pities; full of bowels; his bowels are troubled, and do sound, when he is (for upholding justice, or reclaiming sinners) constrained to inflict punishment; of him it is said, that his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel; and that he was afflicted in all the afflictions of his people. So incredible miracles doth infinite charity work in God, that the impassable God in a manner should suffer with us, that happiness itself should partake in our misery; that grief should spring up in the fountain of joy. How this can be, we thoroughly cannot well apprehend; but surely those expresses are used in condescension to signify the greatly charitable benignity of God, and to show us our duty, that *we should be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful, sympathizing with the miseries and sorrows of our brethren.*

This is that duty which is so frequently inculcated; when we are charged to *put on bowels of pity, to be tender-hearted, to be compassionate* one toward another.



CHARITY.

It is the genius and complexion of charity to effect nothing uncouth or singular in matters of indifferent nature ; to be candid, not rigid, in opinion ; to be pliable, not stiff, in humour ; to be smooth and gentle, not rugged and peevish, in behaviour.

It doth indeed not flatter, not soothe, not humour any man in bad things, or in things very absurd and foolish ; it would rather choose to displease and cross him, than to abuse, to delude, to wrong, or hurt him ; but excepting such cases, it gladly pleaseth all men, denying its own will and conceit to satisfy the pleasure and fancy of others ; practising that which St. Peter enjoined in that precept, *Be of one mind, be compassionate, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous* ; or as St. Paul might intend, when he bid us *to gratify, to indulge one another*.

Hence charity will render a man a general benefactor, in all matters, upon all occasions ; affording to his neighbour all kinds of assistance and relief, according to his neighbour's need, and his own ability : it will make him a bountiful dispenser of his goods to the poor, a comforter of the af-

flicted, a visiter of the sick, an instructor of the ignorant, an adviser of the doubtful, a protector of the oppressed, a hospitable entertainer of strangers, a reconciler of differences, an intercessor for offenders, an advocate of those who need defence, a succourer of all that want help.

Charity indeed will not suffer any man to look down on another with supercilious contempt or neglect, as if he were unworthy or beneath our regard. It will incline superiors to look on their inferiors (their subjects, their servants, their meanest and poorest neighbours), not as beasts or as slaves, but as men, as brethren ; as descending from the same stock, as partakers of the common nature and reason ; as those *who have obtained the like precious faith* ; as heirs of the same precious promises and glorious hopes ; as their equals in the best things, and in all considerable advantages ; equals in God's sight, and according to our Lord's intent, when he said, *One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren* ; according to St. Paul's exhortation to Philemon, that he would receive Onesimus, *not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved in the Lord*.

Accordingly, charity will dispose men of

rank in their behaviour to be condescensive, lowly, meek, courteous, obliging, and helpful, to those who in human eye or in worldly state are most below them ; remembering that ordinance of our Lord, charged on all his disciples, and enforced by his own pattern : *He that is greatest among you let him be your servant.*

Love indeed is the great leveller, which in a manner setteth all things on even ground, and reduceth to a just poise ; which bringeth down heaven to earth, and raiseth up earth to heaven ; which inclineth the highest to wait upon the lowest ; which engageth the strength of the mightiest to help the weakest, and the wealth of the richest to supply the poorest, that *there may be an equality* ; that nowhere there may be an useless abundance, or a helpless indigence.

Charity doth regulate our dealing, our deportment, our conversation, toward our neighbour, implying good usage, and fair treatment of him on all occasions : for no man doth handle that which he loveth rudely or roughly, so as to endanger the loss, the detriment, the hurt or offence thereof.

Wherefore the language of charity is soft and sweet, not wounding the heart, nor grating on the ear of any with whom a man

converseth ; like the language of which the Wise Man saith, *The words of the pure are pleasant words* ;—such as are *sweet to the soul, and health to the bones* ; and, *The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious* ; such as our Lord's were *words of grace* ; such as the Apostle speaketh of, *Let your speech be always with grace*—such as may *give grace to the hearers* ; being entertained, not with aversation, but with favourable acceptance.

Its carriage is gentle, courteous, benign ; bearing in it marks of affection and kind respect.

Its dealing is equal, moderate, and fair ; yielding no occasion of disgust or complaint ; not catching at, or taking advantages, not meting hard measure.

It doth not foster any bad passion or humour, which may embitter or sour conversation, so that it rendereth a man continually good company.

If a man be harsh or surly in his discourse, rugged or rude in his demeanour, hard and rigorous in his dealing, it is a certain argument of his defect in charity ; for that calmeth and sweeteneth the mind ; it quasheth keen, fierce, and boisterous passions ; it discardeth those conceits, and those humours, from whence such practice doth issue.

SERMON.

MOTIVES AND ARGUMENTS TO CHARITY

Hebrew x. 24.

Let us consider one another to provoke unto love
and do good works.

EFFECTS OF CHARITY ON THE GIVER.

Let us consider that charity is a right noble and worthy thing; greatly perfective of our nature; much dignifying and beautifying our soul.

It rendereth a man truly great, enlarging his mind unto a vast circumference, and to a capacity near infinite; so that it by a general care doth reach all things, by an universal affection doth embrace and grasp the world.

By it our reason obtaineth a field or scope

for the employment of it, not confined to the slender interests of one person or one place, but extending to the concerns of all men.

Charity is the imitation and copy of that immense love, which is the fountain of all being and all good ; which made all things, which preserveth the world, which sustaineth every creature ; nothing advanceth so near a semblance of Him, who is essential love and goodness ; who freely and purely, without any regard to his own advantage or capacity of finding any beneficial return, doth bear and express the highest good-will, with a liberal hand pouring down showers of bounty and mercy on all his creatures ; who daily putteth up numberless indignities and injuries, upholding and maintaining those who offend and provoke him.

Charity rendereth us as angels, or peers to those blessed and glorious creatures, who, without receiving or expecting any requital from us, do heartily desire and delight in our good, are ready to promote it, do willingly serve and labour for it. Nothing is more amiable, more admirable, more venerable, even in the common eye and opinion of men ; it hath in it a beauty and a majesty apt to ravish every heart ; even a spark of it in generosity of dealing breedeth admiration, a glimpse of it in formal courtesy of behaviour

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not at least to be as a fox, or a wolf ; either cunningly lurching, or violently ravening for prey ; love only can restrain a man from flying at all, and seizing on whatever he meeteth ; from biting, from worrying, from devouring every one that is weaker than himself, or who cannot defend himself from his paws and teeth.



SOCIAL EFFECTS OF CHARITY.

Friendship is a most useful and pleasant thing, and charity will conciliate good store thereof : it is apt to make all men friends ; for love is the only general philter and effectual charm of souls ; the fire which kindleth all it toucheth, and propagateth itself in every capable subject : and such a subject is every man in whom humanity is not quite extinct ; and hardly can any such man be, seeing every man hath some good humour in him, some blood, some kindly juice flowing in his veins ; no man wholly doth consist of dusky melancholy, or fiery choler ; whence all men may be presumed liable to the powerful impressions of charity :

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its mild and serene countenance, its sweet and gentle speech, its courteous and obliging gesture, its fair dealing, its benign conversation, its readiness to do any good or service to any man will insinuate goodwill and respect into all hearts.

Whereas most of our life is spent in society and discourse, charity is that which doth season and sweeten these, rendering them grateful to others, and commodious to one's self: for a charitable heart is a sweet spring, from whence do issue streams of wholesome and pleasant discourse; it not being troubled with any bad passion or design, which may sour or foul conversation; doth ever make him good company to others, and rendereth them such to himself; which is a mighty convenience. In short, *a charitable man, or true lover of men, will (saith St. Chrysostom) inhabit earth as a heaven, everywhere carrying a serenity with him, and plaiting ten thousand crowns for himself*

We may consider, that secluding the exercise of charity, all the goods and advantages we have (our best faculties of nature, our best endowments of soul, the gifts of Providence, and the fruits of our industry) will become vain and fruitless, or noxious and

baneful to us ; for what is our reason worth, what does it signify, if it serveth only for contriving sorry designs, or transacting petty affairs about ourselves ? what is wit good for, if it must be spent only in making sport, or hatching mischief ? to what purpose is knowledge, if it be not applied to the instruction, direction, admonition, or consolation of others ? what mattereth abundance of wealth, if it be to be uselessly hoarded up, or vainly flung away in wicked or wanton profuseness ; if it be not employed in affording succour to our neighbour's indigency and distress ? what is our credit but a mere noise or puff of air, if we do not give a solidity and substance to it ; by making it an engine of doing good ? what is our virtue itself, if it be buried in obscurity or choked with idleness, yielding no benefit to others by the lustre of its example, or by its real influence ? what is any talent, if it be wrapped up in a napkin ; any light, if it be hid under a bushel ; anything private, if it be not by good use spread out and improved to public benefit ? If these gifts do minister only to our own particular advantage, to our personal convenience, glory, or pleasure, how slim things are they, how inconsiderable is their worth ! But they being managed by charity, become precious and excellent things ; they

are great in proportion to the greatness of their use, or the extent of their beneficial influence: as they carry forth good to the world, so they bring back various benefits to ourselves; they return into our bosom laden with respect and reward from God and from man; they yield thanks and commendation from without, they work comfort and satisfaction within: yea which is infinitely more considerable, and enhanceth the price of our gifts to a vast rate, they procure glory and blessing to God; for *hereby is God glorified, if we bring forth much fruit*: and no good fruit can grow from any other stock than that of charity.

CHARITY AN EASY DUTY.

We may consider, that charity is a very feasible and very easy duty; it requireth no sore pain, no grievous trouble, no great cost: for it consisteth only in good-will, and that which naturally springeth thence: willingness and cheerfulness are necessary ingredients or adjuncts of it; the which imply facility: whence the weakest and poorest man is no less able to perform it than the greatest potentate; his heart may be as charitable, though his hand cannot be so liberal: one of the most noble

and most famous charities that ever was, was the giving two mites ; and the *giving a cup of cold water* is the instance of that beneficence, which shall not fail of being rewarded.

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CHARITY THE FOUNDATION OF ALL OTHER DUTIES AND VIRTUES.

WE may consider that charity is the best, the most assured, the most easy and expedite way or instrument of performing all other duties toward our neighbour : if we would dispatch, love, and all is done ; if we would be perfect in obedience, love, and we shall not fail in any point ; for *love is the fulfilling of the law* ; *love is the bond of perfectness* ; would we be secure in the practice of justice, of meekness, of humility toward all men, of constant fidelity towards our friends, of gentle moderation towards our enemies, of loyalty toward our superiors, of benignity toward our inferiors : if we would be sure to purify our minds from ill thoughts, to restrain our tongue from ill speaking, to abstain from all bad demeanour and dealing ; it is but

having charity, and infallibly you will do all this : for *love worketh no ill to its neighbour ; love thinketh no ill ; love behaveth itself not unseemly.*

Charity giveth worth, form, and life, to all virtue, so that without it no action is valuable in itself, or acceptable to God.

Sever it from courage : and what is that, but the boldness or fierceness of a beast ? from meekness ; and what is that, but the softness of a woman, or the weakness of a child ? from courtesy ; and what is that, but affectation or artifice ? from justice ; what is that but humour or policy ; from wisdom ; but craft and subtilty ;

What meaneth faith without it, but dry opinion ; what hope, but blind presumption ; what alms-doing, but ambitious ostentation ; what undergoing martyrdom, but stiffness or sturdiness of resolution ; what is devotion, but glozing or mocking with God ? what is any practice, how specious soever in appearance, or materially good, but an issue of self-conceit or self-will, of servile fear or mercenary design ? *Though I have faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing ; though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

SERMON.
OF A PEACEABLE TEMPER AND
CARRIAGE.

Rom. xii. 18.

If it be possible as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men.

THE CENSORIOUS MAN.

BUT he that is rigidly severe and censorious in his judgments, blaming in others things indifferent, condemning actions allowable, detracting from qualities commendable, deducing men's doings from the worst causes, and imputing them to the worst ends, and representing them under the most odious appellations ; that calls all impositions of superiors which he dislikes, tyranny, and all

manners of divine worship that suit not to his fancy, superstition, and all pretences to conscience in those that dissent from him, hypocrisy, and all opinions different from his, heresy ; that is suspicious of ill intention without sufficient ground, and prejudicates men's meanings before he well apprehends them, and captiously perverts sayings capable of good construction ; that is curiously inquisitive into his neighbour's life, and gladly observes failings therein, and upon all occasions recites stories to his disgrace and disadvantage ; that is immoderately bitter, fierce, and vehement, in accusing and inveighing against others, painting such as he assumes to impugn, with the blackest colours, in the most horrid shape and ugly dress, converting all matter of discourse (though never so unseasonably and impertinently) into declamation, and therein copiously ex-patiating : in fine, employing his utmost might of wit and eloquence and confidence, in rendering them to others as hateful as he signifies they are to himself : such men, what do they else but loudly proclaim that they despise their neighbour's good-will, purposely provoke his anger, and defy his utmost enmity ? For it is impossible such dealing shuld not, by them who are therein

concerned, be accounted extremely unjust, and to proceed from desperate hatred.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE INNOCENT
CUSTOMS OF THE PLACE
WHERE WE LIVE.

W^e must readily comply with the innocent customs, and obey the established laws of the places where we live. I say, first comply with the customs; which also are in effect inferior laws enacted by the tacit agreement of the generality of men; the non-observation of which is upon many accounts very prejudicial to peaceable life. For to those concerned in it, it will always seem to intimate a squeamish niceness, a froward perverseness, an arrogant, self-conceitedness, a manifest despising other men's judgments, and a virtual condemning their practices of fault or folly, and consequently a monopolizing all goodness, and appropriating all wisdom to himself; qualities intolerably odious to men, and productive of enmity. It incenses the people (hugely susceptible of provocation) with a sense of notable injury done, and contempt cast upon it. For the only authority which

the commonality can lay claim to, consists in prescribing rules of decency in language, habit, gesture, ceremony, and other circumstances of action, declared and ratified by ordinary practice ; nonconformity to which is by them adjudged a marvellous irregularity, contumacy, and rebellion against the majesty of the people, and is infallibly revenged and punished by them.



ALL MEN BROTHERS.

ALL men naturally are of kin and friends to each other, saith Aristotle. Et fratres etiam vestri sumus jure naturæ matris unius ; We are also your brethren in the right of nature our common mother, saith Tertullian of old, in the name of the Christians to the heathens. We are but several streams issuing from one primitive source ; several branches sprouting from the same stock ; several stones hewed out of the same quarry ; one substance, by miraculous efficacy of the divine benediction, diffused and multiplied. One element affords us matter, and one fire actuates it, kindled at first by the breath of God. One blood flows in

all our veins ; one nourishment repairs our decayed bodies, and one common air refreshes our languishing spirits. We are cohabitants of the same earth, and fellow-citizens of the same great commonwealth ; *Unam remp. omnium agnoscimus mundum*, said the fore-mentioned apologist for Christianity. We were all fashioned according to the same original idea (resembling God our common Father), all endowed with the same faculties, inclinations, and affections ; all conspire in the essential and more notable ingredients of our constitution ; and are only distinguished by some accidental, inconsiderable circumstances of age, place, colour, stature, fortune, and the like ; in which we differ as much from ourselves in successions of time. So that what Aristotle said of a friend is applicable to every man ; every man is *another ourself* : and he that hates another detests his own most lively picture ; he that harms another, injures his own nature ; he that denies relief to another, starves a member of his own body, and withers a branch of his own tree. *The merciful man doeth good to his own soul ; but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.* Neither can any personal demerit of vicious habit, erroneous opinion, enormous practice, or signal dis-

courtesy toward us, dissolve these bands : for as no unkindness of a brother can wholly rescind that relation, or disoblige us from the duties annexed thereto ; so neither upon the faults or injuries of any man can we ground a total dispensation from the offices of humanity, especially if the injuries be not irreparable, not the faults incurable.



DEPENDENCY OF MEN UPON EACH OTHER.

THE welfare and safety, the honour and reputation, the pleasure and quiet of our lives, are concerned in maintaining a loving correspondence with all men. For so uncertain is our condition, so obnoxious are we to manifold necessities, that there is no man whose good-will we may not need, whose good word may not stand us in stead, whose helpful endeavour may not sometime oblige us. The great Pompey, the glorious triumpher over nations, and admired darling of fortune, was beholden at last to a slave for the composing his ashes, and celebrating his funeral obsequies. The honour of the great-

est men depends on the estimation of the least ; and the good-will of the meanest peasant is a brighter ornament to the fortune, a greater accession to the grandeur of a prince, than the most radiant gem in his royal diadem. However the spite and enmity of one (and him the most weak otherwise and contemptible) person may happen to spoil the content of our whole life, and deprive us of the most comfortable enjoyments thereof ; may divert our thoughts from our delightful enjoyments to a solicitous care of self-preservation and defence ; may discompose our minds with vexatious passions ; may, by false reports, odious suggestions and slanderous defamations, blast our credit, raise a storm of general hatred, and conjure up a thousand enemies against us ; may, by insidious practices, supplant and undermine us, prejudice our welfare, endanger our estate, and involve us in a bottomless gulph of trouble : it is but reasonable, therefore, if we desire to live securely, comfortably, and quietly, that by all honest means we should endeavour to purchase the good-will of all men, and provoke no man's enmity needlessly ; since any man's love may be useful, and every man's hatred is dangerous.

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CHRIST DESPISED NO MAN

He despised not the meanest, either in outward estate, or spiritual improvement. He invited all unto him, repelled and discouraged none ; nor refused to any that came unto him his counsel and his help. He was averse from no man's society (and if in any degree from any, chiefly from those who confidently pretended to extraordinary sanctity, and proudly contemned others.) Meek and gentle he was, mild and patient ; courteous and benign ; lowly and condescending ; tender and compassionate in his conversation unto all. And for a complement unto his transcendent charity, and for an enforcement unto ours, he laid down his life for us all, as a common price to purchase remission of sins ; a general ransom to redeem the human creation from the captivity of hell and the slavery of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God ; demolishing, by his pacific death all the partition-walls, and laying open all enclosures of the divine favour ; reconciling God to man, and combining man to himself by the fresh cement of his precious blood ; so that not only as fellow-creatures, but (which is exceedingly more) as partakers of the same common redemption, as objects

of the same mercy, as obliged in the same common debt, and as capable of the same happiness, by new and firmer engagements we are bound to all mutual kindness and benevolence toward all. For, *Destroy not*, saith St. Paul (and by like reason, I may say, harm not, vex not, be not unkind to) *him, for whom Christ died.*

SERMON.

THE DUTY AND REWARD OF BOUNTY

TO THE POOR.

Psalm cxiii, 9.

He hath dispensed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honor.

CHARITY THE GREATEST OF DUTIES.

It is indeed the most considerable, that at the final reckoning, when all men's actions shall be strictly scanned, and justly sentenced according to their true desert, a special regard will be had to the discharge or neglect of the duties of charity. It is the bountiful and merciful persons, who have relieved Christ in his poor members and

brethren, who in that day will appear to be the sheep at the right hand, and shall hear the good shepherd's voice uttering those joyful words, *Come, ye blessed of my father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.* He doth not say, because you have made goodly professions, because you have been orthodox in your opinions, because you have frequented religious exercises (have prayed often and long, have kept many fasts, and heard many sermons,) because you have been staunch in your conversations, because you have been punctual in your dealings, because you have maintained a specious guise of piety, sobriety, and justice (although, indeed, he that will come off well at that great trial, must be responsible, and able to yield a good account in respect to all those particulars ;) but because you have been charitably benign and helpful to persons in need and distress, therefore blessed are you; therefore enter into the kingdom of glorious bliss prepared for such persons. This pro-

ceeding more than intimates, that, in the judgment of, our Lord. no sort of virtue or good practice is to be preferred before that of charitable bounty ; or rather that, in his esteem, none is equal thereto ; so that if the question be put to him, which is one of them to Antiochus (in Athanasius' works) which is the most eminent virtue ? our Lord would resolve it no otherwise, than is done by that Father, affirming, that, mercifulness is the queen of virtues ; for that, at the final account, the examination chiefly proceeds upon that ; it is made the special touchstone of piety, and the peculiar ground of happiness. On the other side, those who have been deficient in those performances (uncharitable and unmerciful persons) will at the last trial appear to be the wretched goats on the left hand, unto whom this uncomfortable speech shall by the great Judge be pronounced : *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ; for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink, I was a stranger, and ye took me not in ; naked, and ye clothed me not ; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.* It is not, we may see, for having done that which in this world is called rapine or wrong,

for having pillaged or cozened their neighbour, for having committed adultery or murder, or any other thing prohibited, that these unhappy men are said to be formally impeached, and finally condemned to that miserable doom ; but for having been unkind and unmerciful to their poor brethren ; this at that high tribunal will pass for a most enormous crime, for the capital offence ; for it is this that they shall be cursed, and cast down into consortship with those malicious and merciless fiends, unto whose disposition they did so nearly approach.

Thus it appears how mighty a stress God, in the holy scripture, doth lay upon these duties, so peremptorily, commanding them, so vehemently pressing them, so highly commending them, so graciously by promises alluring us to the performance, so dreadfully by threatenings deterring us from the neglect of them. What an affront then will it be to God's authority, what a distrust of his word, his justice, his wisdom, what a despite to his goodness and mercy, if, notwithstanding all these declarations of his will and purposes, we shall presume to be uncharitable in this kind !

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WANT OF CHARITY AN INJUSTICE.

God, by the poor man's voice (or by his need and misery), demanding his own from us, we are very unjust if we presume to withhold it ; doubly unjust we are, both toward God and toward our neighbour : we are unfaithful stewards, misapplying the goods of our Master, and crossing his order : we are wrongful usurpers, detaining from our neighbour that which God hath allotted him ; we are in the court of conscience ; we shall appear at the bar of God's judgment no better than robbers (under vizards of legal right and possession), spoiling our poor brother of his goods ; his, I say, by the same title as anything can be ours, by the free donation of God, fully and frequently expressed, as we have seen, in his holy word. (He cannot take it away by violence or surreption against our will, but we are bound willingly to yield it up to him ; to refuse this, is wrong in us.) 'Tis the hungry man's bread which we hoard up in our barns, 'tis his meat on which we glut, and his drink which we guzzle ; 'tis the naked man's apparel which we shut up in our presses, or which we exorbitantly ruffle and flaunt in : 'tis the needy person's gold and silver which

we closely hide in our chests, or spend idly, or put to useless use. We are, in thus holding, or thus spending, not only covetous, but wrongful, or havers of more than our own, against the will of the right owners ; plainly violating that precept of Solomon, *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* These things, spoken after the holy fathers, wise instructors in matters of piety, are to be understood with reasonable temperment, and practised with honest prudence. I cannot stand to discuss cases, and remove scruples ; a pious charity will easily discern its due limits and measures, both declining perplexity, and not evading duty. The sum is, that justice towards God and man obligeth us not to suffer our poor brother to perish, or pine away for want; when we surfeit and swim in plenty, or not to see him lack necessities, when we are well able to relieve him.)



PIETY WITHOUT CHARITY IS OF
LITTLE VALUE.

Do we not strangely prevaricate, when we

would seem to appease God's anger, and purchase his favour by our submissions, yet refuse to that which he declares most pleasing to him, and most necessary to those purposes? It is an ordinary thing for men thus to serve God, and thus to delude themselves: *I have known many* (saith St. Basil) *who have fasted, and prayed, and groaned, and expressed all kind of costless piety, who yet would not part with one doit to the afflicted.* Such a cheap and easy piety, which cost us little or nothing, can surely not be worth much; and we must not conceit, that the all-wise God (*the God of knowledge, by whom actions are weighed,* as Anna sang, and who *weigheth the spirit* also, as the Wise Man saith) will be cheated therewith, or take it for more than its just value. No; he hath expressly signified, that he hath *not chosen* such services, nor doth take any pleasure in them: he hath called them *vain and impertinent oblations*; not *sweet or acceptable*, but *abominable and troublesome* to him, such as he *cannot away with, and is weary to bear.* 'Tis *religious liberality* that doth prove us to be serious and earnest in other *religious performances*; which assures that we value matters of piety at a considerable rate: which gives a sub-

stance and solidity to our devotions ; which sanctifies our fasts, and verifies our penances ; which renders our praises real, and our prayers effectual ; so that these being combined, we may reasonably expect acceptance and recompense : and in effect to hear that from God, which by him was returned to good Cornelius ; *Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.*

The uncharitable man cannot think one word true that God says, being loath to trust him for a penny, for a piece of bread, for an old garment. All God's promises of recompense, and threatenings of punishment, he takes for idle fictions ; heaven and hell are but Utopias in his conceit ; the joys of one, offered to the charitable person, are but pleasant fancies : the torments of the other, denounced to the uncharitable, but fearful dreams. All other things are but names ; money and lands are the only real things unto him ; all the happiness he can conceive or wish is contained in bags and barns ; these are the sole points of his faith, and objects of his confidence. *He makes gold his hope, and saith to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence. He rejoices because his wealth is great, and because his hand hath gotten*

much, as Job speaketh, disclaiming that practice in himself, and tacitly charging it on the person we speak of. He doth, in fine, affect a total independency upon God, and cares to have no dealing with him : he would trust to himself and live on his own estate ; so gross infidelity and horrible profaneness of mind lie couched under this sort of vices.

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MERCY THE HIGHEST ATTRIBUTE OF GOD.

LET us consider, that nothing is more conformable to God's nature, or renders us more like to him than beneficence and mercy ; and that consequently nothing can be more grateful to him : that nothing is more disagreeable and contrary to the essential disposition of God, than illiberality and unmercifulness : and therefore that nothing can be more distasteful to him. What is any being in the world but an efflux of his bounty, and an argument of his liberality ? Look every where about nature, consider the whole tenor of providence, survey all the works,

and scan all the actions of God, you will find them conspiring in attestation to those sweet characters and elogies which the holy scripture ascribeth to God, representing him to be *merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness*; to be *sorry for evil*, (incident to, or inflicted upon any creature) to *delight in mercy, to wait that he may be gracious*; styling him the *God of love, of peace, of hope, of patience, of all grace, and of all consolation, the Father of pities, rich in mercy, and full of bowels*; affirming of him, and by manifold evidences demonstrating, that he is *benign even unto the ungrateful and evil*; that *he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*. Nature, I say, providence, and revelation, do all concur in testifying this, that there is nothing in God so peculiarly admirable, nothing, as it were, so godlike, that is, so highly venerable and amiable, as to do good and show mercy. We therefore by liberal communication to the needy do most approach to the nature of God, and most exactly imitate his practice acquiring to ourselves thereby somewhat of divinity, and becoming little gods to our neighbour. *Nothing* (saith St. Chrysostom) *maketh us so near equal to God as beneficence*; and *Be* (saith St. Gregory Nazianzen)

a god to the unfortunate, imitating the mercy of God; for a man hath nothing of God so much as to do good. That such hath been always the common apprehension of men, the practice of all times sheweth, in that have been ever apt to place their benefactors among their gods, deferring that love and veneration unto them in degree, which in perfection do appertain to the supreme Benefactor.

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NOTHING SO DISTANT FROM GOD
AS UNCHARITABLENESS.

BUT on the other side, there is not in nature anything so remotely distant from God, or so extremely opposite to him, as a greedy and griping niggard : hell is scarce so contrary to heaven, as such a man's disposition to the nature of God : for 'tis *goodness* which sits gloriously triumphant at the top of heaven ; and *uncharitableness* lieth miserably grovelling under the bottom of hell ; heaven descends from the one, as its principal cause ; hell is built on the other, as its main foundation : as the one approximates the

angels to God, and beatifies them; so the other removeth the cursed fiends to such a distance from God and happiness: not to wish, not to do any good, is that which renders them both so bad and so wretched; and whoever in his conditions is so like to them, and in his practice so agrees with them, cannot but also be very odious to God, and extremely unhappy. God cannot but abhor so base a degeneration from his likeness in those who by nature are his children, and should be further such according to his gracious design; neither can anything more offend his eyes, than seeing them to use one another unkindly. So that, if obtaining the certain favour of the great God, with all the benefit attending it, seem considerable to us; or if we think it advisable to shun his displeasure, with its sad effects; it concerns us to practise these duties.



TRUE LIGHT TO VIEW THE POOR IN.

He whose need craves our bounty, whose misery demands our mercy, what is he? He is not truly so mean and sorry a thing, as the disguise of misfortune, under which he

appears, doth represent him. He who looks so deformedly and dismally, who to outward sight is so ill bestead, and so pitifully accoutred, hath latent in him much of admirable beauty and glory. He within himself containeth a nature very excellent ; an immortal soul, and an intelligent mind, by which he nearly resembleth God himself, and is comparable to angels : he invisibly is owner of endowments, rendering him capable of the greatest and best things. What are money and lands ? What are silk and fine linen ? What are horses and hounds, in comparison to reason, to wisdom, to virtue, to religion, which he hath, or (in despite of all misfortune) he may have if he please ? He whom you behold so dejectedly sneaking, in so despicable a garb, so destitute of all convenience and comfort, (lying in the dust, naked, or clad with rags, meagre with hunger or pain), he comes of a most high and heavenly extraction : he was born a prince, the son of the greatest King eternal ; he can truly call the sovereign Lord of all the world his father, having derived his soul from the mouth, having had his body formed by the hands of God himself. The same orlorn wretch, whom we are so apt to espise and trample upon, was framed and

constituted lord of the visible world ; had all the goodly brightnesses of heaven, and all the costly furnitures of earth, created to serve him. Yea, he was made an inhabitant of paradise, and possessor of felicities superlative ; had immortal life and endless joy in his hand, did enjoy the entire favour and friendship of the Most High. Such in worth of nature and nobleness of birth he is, as a man ; and highly more considerable he is, as a Christian. For, as vile and contemptible as he looks, God hath so regarded and prized him, as for his sake to descend from heaven, to clothe himself with flesh, to assume the form of a servant ; for his good to undertake and undergo the greatest inconveniences, infirmities, wants, and disgraces, the most grievous troubles and most sharp pains incident to mortal nature. God hath adopted him to be his child ; the Son of God hath deigned to call him brother ; he is a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost, a free denizen of the heavenly city, an heir of salvation, and candidate of eternal glory. The greatest and richest personage is not capable of better privileges than God hath granted him, or of higher preferments than God hath designed him to. He equally with the mightiest prince is the

object of God's especial providence and grace, of his continual regard and care, of his fatherly love and affection ; who, as good Elihu saith, *accepted not the persons of princes, nor regarded the rich more than the poor ; for they are all the work of his hands.* In fine, this poor creature whom thou seest is a man, and a christian, thine equal, whoever thou art, in nature, and thy peer in condition : I say not, in the uncertain and unstable gifts of fortune, not in this worldly state, which is very considerable ; but in gifts vastly more precious, in title to an estate infinitely more rich and excellent. Yea, if thou art vain and proud, be sober and humble ; he is thy better, in true dignity much to be preferred before thee, far in real wealth surpassing thee : for, *Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.*



THE WORLD NOT BELONGING TO A FEW ONLY.

INEQUALITY and private interest in things

(together with sicknesses and pains, together with all other infelicities and inconveniences) were the by-blows of our fall : sin introduced these degrees and distances : it devised the names of rich and poor ; it begot these engrossings and inclosures of things, it forged those two pestilent words, *meum* and *tuum*, which have engendered so much strife among men, and created so much mischief in the world : these preternatural distinctions were, I say, brooded by our fault, and are in great part fostered and maintained thereby ; for were we generally so good, so just, so charitable as we should be, they could hardly subsist, especially in that measure they do. God indeed (for promoting some good ends, and for prevention of some mischiefs, apt to spring from our ill-nature in this our lapsed state ; particularly to prevent the strife and disorder which scrambling would cause among men, presuming on equal right and parity of force) doth suffer them in some manner to continue, and enjoins us a contented submission to them : but we mistake, if we think that natural equality and community are in effect quite taken away ; or that all the world is so cantonized among some few, that all the rest have no share therein. No ; every man hath still a com-

petent patrimony due to him, and a sufficient provision made for his tolerable subsistence. God hath brought no man here to be necessarily starved, or pinched with extreme want ; but hath assigned to every one a child's portion, in some fair way to be obtained by him, either by legal right, or by humble request, which according to conscience ought to have effect. No man, therefore, is allowed to detain, or to destroy superfluously, what another man apparently wants ; but is obliged to impart it to him ; so that rich men are indeed but the treasurers, the stewards, the caterers of God for the rest of men, having a strict charge *to dispense unto every one his meat in due season*, and no just privileges to withhold it from any : the honour of distribution is conferred upon them, as a reward for their fidelity and care ; the right of enjoyment is reserved to the poor, as a provision for their necessity. Thus hath God wisely projected, that all his children should both effectually and quietly be provided for, and that none of them should be oppressed with penury ; so that, as St. Paul hath it, *one man's abundance shall supply another man's want, that there may be an equality* : for since no man can enjoy more than he needs, and every man should have as much

as he needs, there can be really no great inequality among men ; the distinction will scarce remain elsewhere than in fancy.



CHANGE MADE IN OUR STATE BY DEATH.

HOWEVER, if it be uncertain when, it is most certain, that after a very short time our thread will be spun out ; then shall we be rifled, and quite stript of all ; becoming stark-naked, as when we came into the world : we shall not carry with us one grain of glistening metals, or one rag of our gaudy stuff ; our stately houses, our fine gardens, and our spacious walks, must all be exchanged for a close hole under the ground ; we must for ever bid farewell to our pomps and magnificences, to our feasts and jollities, to our sports and pastimes ; not one of all our numerous and splendid retinue, no companion of our pleasure, no admirer of our fortune, no flatterer of our vices, can wait upon us ; desolate and unattended we must go down to the chambers of darkness : then shall we find that to die rich, as men are

wont improperly to speak, is really to die most poor ; that to have carefully kept our money, is to have lost it utterly ; that by leaving much, we do indeed leave worse than nothing : to have been wealthy, if we have been illiberal and unmerciful, will be no advantage or satisfaction to us after we have gone hence ; yea, it will be the cause of huge damage and bitter regret unto us. All our treasures will not procure us any favour, or purchase one advocate for us, in that impartial world ; yea, it shall be they which will there prosecute us with clamorous accusations, will bear sore testimony against us (*The rust of them*, saith St. James, *shall be a witness against us*, signifying our unjust or uncharitable detention of them), will obtain a most heavy sentence upon us ; they will render our audit more difficult, and inflame our reckoning ; they will aggravate the guilt of our sins with imputations of unfaithfulness and ingratitude ; so with their load they will press us deeper into perdition : to omit, that having so ill managed them, we shall leave them behind us as marks of obloquy, and monuments of infamy upon our memories ; for ordinarily of such a rich person it is true that Job says of him, *Men shall clap their hands at him*,

and shall hiss him out of his place; like one who departs from off this stage, after having very ill acted his part.

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REMORSE MUST PURSUE THE UN- CHARITABLE MAN.

FURTHER, the contributing part of our goods to the poor will qualify us to enjoy the rest with satisfaction and comfort. The oblation of these first-fruits, as it will sanctify the whole lump of our estate, so it will sweeten it; having offered this well-pleasing sacrifice of piety, having discharged this debt of justice, having paid this tribute of gratitude, our hearts being at rest, and our conscience well satisfied, we shall, like those good people in the Acts, *eat our meat with gladness and singleness of heart*; to see the poor man by our means accommodated, eased, and refreshed, will give a delicious relish to all our enjoyments. But withholding his portion from the poor, as it will pollute and profane all our estate, so it will render the fruition thereof sour or unsavoury to us: for can we with any

content taste our dainties, or view our plenties, while the poor man stands in sight pining with hunger? Can we without regret see our walls clothed with tapestry, our horses decked with golden trappings, our attendants strutting in wanton gaiety, while our honest poor brother appears half naked, and trembling with cold? Can we carry on one finger enough to furnish ten poor people with necessities, and have the heart within us, without shame and displeasure, to see them want? No; the sense of our impiety and ingratitude toward God, of our inhumanity and unworthiness toward our neighbour, will not fail (if ever we considerably reflect on our behaviour) to sting us with cruel remorse and self-condemnation; the clamours of want and misery surrounding us will pierce our ears, and wound our hearts; the frequent objects of pity and mercy, do what we can to banish them from our prospect, or regard will so assail, and so pursue us, as to disturb the freedom of our enjoyments, to quash the briskness of our mirth, to allay the sweetness of our pleasure; yea rather, if stupidity and obduration have not seized on us, to imbitter all unto us; we shall feel that true, which Zophar speaks of the cruel

and covetous oppressor : *Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly—he shall not rejoice in his substance—in the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.*

I shall touch but one consideration more, persuasive of this practice ; it is this : The peculiar nature of our religion specially requires it, and the honour thereof exacts it from us ; nothing better suits Christianity, nothing more graces it, than liberality ; nothing is more inconsistent therewith, or more disparageth it, than being miserable and sordid. A Christian niggard is the veriest nonsense than can be : for what is a Christian ? what, but a man who adores God alone, who loves God above all things, who reposes all his trust and confidence in God ? What is he, but one who undertaketh to imitate the most good and bountiful God ; to follow, as the best pattern of his practice, the most benign and charitable Jesus, the Son of God ; to obey the laws of God, and his Christ, the sum and substance of which is charity ; half whose religion doth consist in loving his neighbour as himself.

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AN UNCHARITABLE MAN NO
CHRISTIAN.

WE grossly mistake, if we take giving of alms to be a Jewish or Popish practice, suitable to children or dullards in religion, beneath so refined, so improved, so loftily spiritual gallants as we. No ; 'tis a duty most properly and most highly christian, as none more ; a most goodly fruit of grace, and a most faithful mark thereof : *By the experiment of this ministration, we* (as St. Paul saith) *glorify God for our professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ, and for our liberal distribution unto our brethren and unto all men* : without it, our faith is dead and senseless, our attainments are fond presumptions, our fine notions and delicate spiritualities are in truth but silly dreams, the issues of a proud and ignorant fancy ; he that appears hard-hearted and close-fisted towards his needy brother, let him think or call himself what he pleaseth, he plainly is no Christian, but a blemish, a reproach, and a scandal to that honourable name.

SERMON.

UPON THE PASSION OF OUR BLESSED
SAVIOUR.

Phil ii, 8.

And being formed in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

UNWORTHINESS OF MAN.

Is it not madness for us to be conceited of any worth in ourselves, to confide in any merit of our works, to glory in any thing belonging to us, to fancy ourselves brave, fine, happy persons, worthy of great respect and esteem ; whereas our unworthiness, our demerit, our forlorn estate, did extort from the most gracious God a displeasure needing such a reconciliation, did impose upon the

most glorious Son of God a necessity to undergo such a punishment in our behalf?

How can we reasonably pretend to any honour, or justly assume any regard to ourselves, when as the first-born of heaven, *the Lord of glory*, partaker of divine majesty, was fain to *make himself of no reputation*, to put himself into *the garb of a servant*, and, under the imputation of a malefactor, to bear such disgrace and infamy in our room, in lieu of the confusion due to us?

What more palpable confutation can there be of human vanity and arrogance, of all lofty *imaginations*, all presumptuous confidences, all turgid humours, all fond self-pleasing and self-admirings, than is that tragical cross, wherein, as in a glass, our foul deformity, our pitiful meanness, our helpless infirmity, our sad wofulness, are so plainly represented.

CHRIST UPON THE CROSS.

CAN we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and prosperous in this world, to swim in affluence and pleasure?—can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with some wants and straits here; seeing the Fountain of all happiness did himself purposely condescend to so forlorn a state,

If with devout eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, besmeared all over with streams of his own blood, groaning under smart anguish of pain, encompassed with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding* (as it was foretold of him) *his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from shame and spitting*; will not the imagination of such a spectacle dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all that extravagant glee which we can find in any wild frolics or riotous merriments? will it not stain all our pride and check our wantonness? will it not dispose our minds to be sober, placing our happiness in things of another nature, seeking our content in matters of higher importance; preferring obedience to the will of God, before compliance with the fancies and desires of men?—according to that precept of St. Peter, *Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind—so as no longer to live the remaining time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

SERMON.
OF CONTENTMENT.

Phil. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am therewith
to be contented.

MAN'S IMPERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF
HIS CONDITION ON EARTH.

BUT it perhaps displeaseth us, that the course of the world doth not go right, or according to our mind ; that justice is not well dispensed, that virtue is under hatches, that worth is not considered, that industry is not rewarded, that innocence and modesty are trampled upon ; that favour, partiality, corruption, flattery, craft, impudence, do carry all before them ; devouring all the encouragements due to honest industry : this may be and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer ?

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observed, but why should it displease? art thou guilty of contributing to this? then mend; if not, then bear; especially seeing thou canst not help it; for so it hath always been and ever will be in the world, that things never have gone there as the wisest judge, or the best men, desire: there have never been good men enough to sway the world; nor will the few good men that are, be so active in promoting public good, as bad are in driving on their private designs. Doth not this course of things necessarily spring from the nature of men, which therefore we should no more be vexed at, than for that a serpent hath poison, or that a wasp hath a sting? we can wonder at it, why should we then be strangely affected by it? could any man ever have been pleased, if this were a sufficient cause of displeasure? However the world goes, we may yet make a tolerable shift, God is engaged competently to provide for us; that should satisfy us. God observeth these things no less than we, and he can easily hinder them, yet he thinketh good to suffer them; and shall not we do so likewise? There is, in fine, appointed a judgment hereafter, when all these things shall be redressed and set straight; when justice and virtue shall triumph, when

integrity and industry shall find their due recompense: it is but a moment to that time, and till then we may rest satisfied.

Thus, if we do survey and rightly state things which cause discontent, and seem to render our condition hard and sad, we shall find, that not from the things, but from ourselves, all the mischief proceeds: we by our imagination give to the lightest things a weight, and swell the smallest things into a vast bulk; we fancy them very frightful and doleful, then we tremble and grieve at them. Mere names (the names of poverty, of disgrace, of defeat) do scare us, without consulting reason, and considering how little terrible the things are themselves. We follow silly prejudices, judging that highly which the vulgar admireth; that very evil, which the weakest sort of men are wont to complain of: hence so commonly doth our case seem grievous. But in truth there is no condition so bad, but if we manage it well and wisely, if we bend our mind to comply with it, if we moderate our passions about the accidents thereof, if we vigilantly embrace and enjoy the advantages thereof, may not be easily supportable, yea prove very comfortable to us: it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverse

behaviours, which do create the trouble which seemeth adherent to any condition, and embittereth every state; which from any slight occasion doth create vexation, and turneth every event into disaster.



ADVERSITY NECESSARY TO MAKE A MAN KNOW HIMSELF.

He must be very ignorant of himself (of his own temper and inclinations, of the strength and forces of his reason), who hath not met with some rubs and crosses to try himself and them with: the greater part of things he must little understand, who hath not experienced the worst part: he cannot have skill to wield and govern his passions, who never had them stirred up, and tossed about by cross accidents; he can be no good pilot in matters of human life, who hath not for some time sailed in a rough sea, in foul weather, among sands and shelves; he could have no good opportunity of employing thoroughly, or improving his wit, his courage, his industry, who hath had no straits to extricate himself from, no diffi-

culties to surmount, no hardships to sustain : the virtues of humility, of patience, of contentedness, necessarily must be unknown to him, to whom no disgraces, no wants, no sore pains, have arrived, by well enduring which, those virtues are learnt, and planted in the soul : scarce can he become very charitable or compassionate to others, who never himself hath felt the smart of affliction, or inconveniences of any distress, for even, as the apostle teacheth us, our Saviour himself was obliged *to suffer tribulation*, that he thence might become *merciful* and *disposed to succour the afflicted*.



THIS WORLD IS FOR WORLDLINESS

Look *first* upon the world, as it is commonly managed and ordered by men : thou perhaps art displeased, that thou dost not prosper and thrive therein ; that thou dost not share in the goods of it ; that its accommodations and preferments are all snapt from thee ; that thy pretences are not satisfied, and thy designs fail : this thou dost take to be somewhat hard and unequal, and therefore art grieved. But if thou art wise, thou

shouldst not wonder ; if thou art good, thou shouldst not be vexed hereat : for thou hast not, perhaps, any capacity for this world ; thy temper and disposition are not framed to suit with its ways ; thy principles and rules do clash with it, thy resolutions and designs do not well comport with prosperity here ; thou canst not or wilt not use the means needful to compass worldly ends : thou perhaps hast a meek, quiet, modest, sincere, steady disposition ; thou canst not be pragmatical and boisterous, eager and fierce, importunately troublesome, intolerably confident, unaccountably versatile and various : thou hast certain pedantic notions about right and wrong, certain romantic fancies about another world (unlike to this), which thou dost stiffly adhere to, and which have an influence upon thy actions : thou hast a squeamish conscience, which cannot relish this, cannot digest that advantageous course of proceeding ; a scrupulous humour, that hampereth thee, and curbeth thee from attempting many things which would serve thy purpose ; thou hast a spice of silly generosity, which maketh divers profitable ways of acting (such as forging and feigning, supplanting others by detraction and calumny, soothing and flattering people)

to be below thee, and unworthy of thee ; thou thinkest thyself obliged, and art peremptorily resolved to observe strict rules of justice, of humanity, of charity ; to speak as thou meanest, to do as thou wouldest be done to, to wrong no man anywise, to consider and tender the case of other men as thine own : thy designs are honest and moderate, conducible to (or at least consistent with) the public good, injurious or hurtful to no man ; thou carriest on thy designs by fair ways, by a modest care and harmless diligence ; nor canst be drawn to use any other, how seemingly needful soever, which do savour of fraud, violence, any sort of wrong or baseness : thou hast an honest pride and haughtiness of mind, which will not let thee condescend to use those sly tricks, crooked ways and shifts, which commonly are the compendious and most effectual ways of accomplishing designs : thou art, in fine, (like Helvidius Priscus), in thy dealings and proceedings, *pervicax recti*, wilfully and *peevishly honest* : such a one perhaps thou art, and such is thy way ; and canst thou hope to be any body, or get anything here ? shall such a superstitious fop, such a conscientious simpleton, such a bashful sneaksby, so fan-

tastic a philosopher, pretend to any thing here? No: thou art here *piscis in arido*, quite out of thy element; this world is not for *thee* to thrive in.

This world is for worldlings to possess and enjoy: *It was* (say the Rabbins) *made for the presumptuous*; and although God did not altogether design it for them, yet men have almost made it so: they are best qualified to thrive in it, who can lustily bustle and scramble; who can fiercely swagger and huff; who can fawn; who can wind and wriggle like a serpent; who can finely cog and gloze; who can neatly shuffle and juggle; who can shrewdly over-reach and undermine others; those slippery, wily artists, who can veer any whither with any wind: those men of impregnable confidence, who can insist upon any pretences: who can be indefatigably and irresistibly urgent, nor will be repulsed or baffled by any means; those who have a temper so lax and supple, that they can bend it to any compliance advantageous to them; who have a spirit so limber, that they can stretch it any whither; who have face enough, and conscience little enough, to do any thing; who have no certain principles, but such as will sort with their interests; no rules but such

Lesbian and leaden ones, that easily may be accommodated to their purposes ; whose designs all tend to their own private advantage, without any regard to the public, or to the good of others ; who can use any means conducive to such designs, boggling at nothing which serveth their purpose ; not caring what they say, be it true or false ; what they do, be it right or wrong, so it seem profitable : this is called wisdom, prudence, dexterity, ability, knowledge of men, and of the world, and I know not what beside ; in the Scripture, the *wisdom of the world*, and *of the flesh*, *craft*, *guile*, *deceit*, &c. For such persons it is to flourish in this world : *Behold, these* (saith the Psalmist) *are the ungodly, who prosper in the world, and who increase in riches ; they are not in trouble as other men ; neither are they plagued like other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness : they have more than heart could wish : they it is who love the world, who seek it, who study and labour for it, who spend all their time, and employ all their care about it ; and it is not fit they should have it ? is it not a pity they should miss it ? is it not natural, that they who sow the flesh should reap from the flesh ? Should not they who use the proper*

means obtain the end? Should not they arrive at the place, who proceed in the direct road thither?



THIS WORLD FULL OF EVILS.

It hath always been, and always will be, a universal complaint and lamentation, that the life of man and trouble are individual companions, continually and closely sticking one to the other; that life and misery are but several names for the same thing; that our state here is nothing else but a combination of various evils (made up of cares, of labours, of dangers, of disappointments of discords, of disquiets, of diseases, of manifold pains and sorrows;) that all ages, from wailing infancy to querulous decrepitness, and all conditions, from the careful sceptre to the painful spade, are fraught with many great inconveniences peculiar to each of them; that all the face of the earth is overspread with mischiefs as with a general and perpetual deluge; that nothing perfectly sound, nothing safe, nothing stable, nothing serene, is here to be found: this, with one sad voice, all mankind resoundeth; this our poets are ever moanfully singing.

this our philosophers do gravely inculcate ; this the experience of all times loudly proclaimeth ; for what are all histories, but continued registers of the evils incident to men ? what do they all describe, but wars and slaughters, mutinies and seditions, tumults and confusions, devastations and ruins ? what do they tell us, but of men furiously striving together circumventing, spoiling, destroying one another ? what do we daily hear reported, but cruel broils, bloody battles, and tragical events ; great numbers of men slain, wounded, carried into captivity ; cities sacked and rased, countries harassed and depopulated, kingdoms and commonwealths overturned ? what do we see before our eyes, but men carking, toiling, bickering ; some worn out with labour, some pining away for want, some groaning under pain ? And amidst so many common miseries and misfortunes, in so generally confused and dismal a state of things, is it not ridiculously absurd for us, doth it not argue in us a prodigious fondness of self-love, heinously to resent, or impatiently to bemoan our particular and private crosses ? May not reasonably that expostulation of Jeremy to Baruch reach us ? *The Lord saith thus : Behold, that which I have built I will break down*

and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil on all flesh.

SERMON.

OF PATIENCE

Peter ii, 21.

Because Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.

SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

CAN we also, if we *consider him that endured such contradiction from sinners*, be transported with any wrathful or revengeful passion, upon any provocation from our brethren ? Can we hope or wish for better usage from men than our Lord did ever find ? Can we be much displeased with any man for thwarting our desires or interests, for dissenting from our conceits, for crossing our humours, whenas he, to whom all respect and observance was due, did meet with so little regard

or compliance in any way ; contentedly did encounter repulses, disappointments, oppositions from the perverse and spiteful world ? Can we be very jealous of our credit, or furious when our imaginary honour (honour that we never really deserved or can justly claim, being guilty of so many great faults and sins) is touched with the least disgraceful reflection, if we do well observe and mind that the most truly, and indeed only honourable personage (only honourable, because only innocent person) that ever was, had his reputation aspersed by the most odious reproaches which deepest envy and malice could devise, without any grievous resentment, or being solicitous otherwise to assert or clear it than by a constant silence ? Can we be exasperated by every petty affront (real or supposed), when the most noble, most courteous, most obliging person that breathed upon earth, was treacherously exposed to violence by his own servant, shamefully deserted by his own most beloved friends, despitefully treated by those whom he had never offended, by those upon whom he had heaped the greatest benefits, without expressing any anger or displeasure against them, but yielding many signal testimonies of tenderest pity and love toward them ? Can we see our Lord treated like a slave and a

thief, without any disturbance or commotion of heart ; and we, vile wretches, upon every slight occasion, swell with fierce disdain, pour forth reproachful language, execute horrible mischief upon our brethren ? He indeed was surrounded with injuries and affronts ; every sin, that since the foundation of things hath been committed, was an offence against him and a burden upon him (*God laid upon him the iniquities of us all :*) so many declared enemies, so many rebels, so many persecutors, so many murderers he had as there have lived men in the world : for every sinner did in truth conspire to his affliction and destruction : we all in effect did betray him, did accuse him, did mock, did scourge, did pierce and crucify him ; yet he forgave all offences, he died for all persons ; *while we were yet enemies , yet sinners, he died for us* to rescue us from death and misery : and shall we not then, in imitation of him, for his dear sake, in gratitude, respect, and obedience to him, be ready to bear the infirmities of our brethren, to forgive any small wrongs or offences from them ; whatever they do to us, to love them, and do them what good we can ? If so admirable a pattern of patience and meekness so immense, cannot, what is there that can, oblige or move us ?

SERMON.

REJOICE EVERMORE.

1 Thess. v, 16.

MAN'S VAIN SEARCH AFTER
HAPPINESS.

It is true that men, after a confused manner, are very eager in the quest, and earnest in the pursuit of joy ; they rove through all the forests of creatures, and beat every bush of nature for it, hoping to catch it either in natural endowments and improvements of soul, or in the gifts of fortune, or in the acquists of industry ; in temporal possessions, in sensual enjoyments, in ludicrous divertissements and amusements of fancy ;

in gratification of their appetites and passions ; they all hunt for it, though following a different scent, and running in various tracks ; some in way of plodding for rare notions ; some in compassing ambitious projects : some in amassing heaps of wealth ; some in practice of over-reaching subtilties ; some in wreaking their malice, their revenge, their envy ; some in venting frothy conceits, bitter scoffs, or profane raileries ; some in jovial conversation and quaffing the full bowls ; some in music and dancing ; some in gallantry and courting : some in all kinds of riotous excess and wanton dissoluteness ; so each in his way doth incessantly prog for joy ; but all much in vain, or without any considerable success ; finding at most, instead of it, some faint shadows, or transitory flashes of pleasure, the which, depending on causes very contingent and mutable, residing in a frail temper of fluid humours of body consisting in slight touches upon the organs, of sense, in frisks of the corporeal spirits, or in fumes and vapours twitching the imagination, do soon flag and expire ; their short enjoyment being also tempered with regret, being easily dashed by any cross accident, soon declining into a nauseous satiety, and in the end degenerating into gall and bitter

remorse ; for, *Even* (as Solomon observed) *in laughter the heart is sorrowful ; and the end of that mirth is heaviness ; and, Though* as it is said in Job (ch. xx. ver. 12, 14, 20). *wickedness is sweet in the mouth—yet his meat in his bowels is turned ; it is the gall of asps within him* : so that indeed the usual delights which men affect are such, that we should not if we could, and we could not if we would, constantly entertain them ; *rejoicing evermore*, being equally unreasonable and impossible.

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RELIGION THE ONLY CONSTANT SOURCE OF JOY.

It is a scandalous misprision, vulgarly admitted, concerning religion, that it is altogether sullen and sour, requiring a dull, lumpish, morose kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all good humour ; whereas, on the contrary, it alone is the never-failing source of true, pure, and steady joy ; such as is deeply rooted in the heart, immoveably founded in the reason of things, permanent like the immortal spirit wherein it dwelleth,

and like the eternal objects whereon it is fixed, which is not apt to fade or cloy : and is not subject to any impressions apt to corrupt or impair it : whereas, in our text, and in many texts parallel to it, we see, that our religion doth not only allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful, as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be sad for one minute, banishing the least fit of melancholy, charging us in all times, upon all occasions, to be cheerful ; supposing, consequently, that it is in some manner possible to be so, and affording power to effect what it doth require.

Such, indeed, is the transcendent goodness of our God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and our sorrow to be our sin, adapting his holy will to our principal instinct ; that he would have us to resemble himself, as in all other perfections, so in a constant state of happiness ; that as he hath provided a glorious heaven of bliss for us hereafter, so he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradise of delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the whole frame of our religion in a tendency to produce joy in those who embrace it ; for what is the gospel, but, as the holy angel, the first promulger of it, did report, *good tidings of*

great joy to all people? How doth God represent himself therein, but *as the God of love, of hope, of peace, of all consolation*, cheerfully smiling in favour on us, graciously inviting us to the most pleasant enjoyments, bountifully dispensing most comfortable blessings of mercy, of grace, of salvation to us? for what doth our Lord call us to him, but *that he may give us rest and refreshment to our souls*; that he may *wipe away all tears from our eyes*; that he may save us from most woful despair, and settle us *in a blessed hope*; that we may *enter into our Master's joy*; that *our joy may be full*, and such as *no man can take from us?*

Wherefore a Christian, as such (according to the design of his religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates), is the most jocund, blithe, and gay person in the world; always in humour and full of cheer; continually bearing a mind well satisfied, a light heart and calm spirit, a smooth brow and serene countenance, a grateful accent of speech, and a sweetly composed tenor of carriage; no black thought, no irksome desire, no troublesome passion, should lodge in his breast; any furrow, any frown, any cloud, doth sit ill

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upon his face ; the least fretful word or forward behaviour doth utterly misbecome him ; if at any time it appear otherwise, it is a deflection from his character ; it is a blemish and wrong to his profession ; it argueth a prevarication in his judgment or in his practice ; he forgetteth that he is a Christian, or hath not preserved the innocence belonging to that name. For if a Christian remembereth what he is, or is sensible of his condition ; if he reflecteth on the dignity of his person, the nobleness of his relations, the sublimity of his privileges, the greatness and certainty of his hopes, how can he be out of humour ? Is it not absurd for him that is at peace with Heaven, with his own conscience, with all the world ; for the possessor of the best goods, and the heir of a blessed immortality ; for the friend, the favourite, the son of God, to fret or wail ?



SERMON.

THE CONSIDERATION OF OUR LATTER

END.

Psalm xc, 12.

Teach us to number our days, that we may apply
our hearts unto wisdom.

WORLDLY GLORY BASE AND
FLEETING.

To begin, then, with that which takes the
chief place, which the world most dotes
on, which seems most great and eminent
among men ; secular state and grandeur,
might and prowess, honour and reputation,
favour and applause of men, all the objects
of human pride and ambition : of this kind,

St. Peter thus pronounces, *all the glory of men is as the flower of the grass ; the grass is dried up, and the flower thereof doth fall off* ; it is as the flower of the grass, how specious soever, yet the most fading and failing part thereof ; the grass itself will soon wither, and the flower doth commonly fall off before that. We cannot hold this flower of worldly glory beyond our short time of life ; and we may easily much sooner be deprived of it : many tempests of fortune may beat it down, many violent hands may crop it ; it is apt of itself to fade upon the stalk ; however the sun (the influence of age and time) will assuredly burn and dry it up, with our life that upholds it. *Surely* (saith the Psalmist) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie* : men of high degree ; the mighty princes, the famous captains, the subtile statesmen, the grave senators ; they who turn and toss about the world at their pleasure ; who, in the prophet's language, *make the earth tremble, and shake kingdoms* : even these, they are a lie (said he, who himself was none of the least considerable among them, and by experience well knew their condition, the greatest and most glorious man of his time, king David.) They are a lie ; that is, their state presents

something of brave and admirable to the eye of men, but it is only *deceptio visus*; a show without a substance; it doth but delude the careless spectators with false appearance; it hath nothing under it solid or stable; being laid in the balance (the royal prophet there subjoins; that is, being weighed in the scales of right judgment, being thoroughly considered), it will prove lighter than vanity itself; it is less valuable than mere emptiness, and nothing itself. That saying sounds like a hyperbole; but it may be true in a strict sense, seeing that the care and pains in maintaining it, the fear and jealousy of losing it, the envy, obloquy and danger that surround it, the snares it hath in it, and temptations inclining men to be puffed up with pride, to be insolent and injurious, to be corrupted with pleasure (with other bad concomitants thereof), do more than countervail whatever either of imaginary worth or real convenience may be in it. Perhaps, could it, without much care, trouble, and hazard, continue for ever, or for a long time, it might be thought somewhat considerable: but since its duration is uncertain and short; since *man in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish*; that they who look so *like gods*, and are

called so, and are worshipped as such, *yet must die like men*, like men, *yea like sheep shall be laid in the grave*; since, as it is said of the king of Babylon in Isaiah, *their pomp must be brought down to the grave, and the noise of their viols; the worm shall be spread under them, and the worm shall cover them*; seeing that a moment of time shall extinguish all their lustre, and still all that tumult about them; that they must be disrobed of their purple, and be clothed with corruption; that their so spacious and splendid palaces must soon be exchanged for close darksome coffins; that both their own breath, and the breath of them who now applaud them, must be stopped; that they who now bow to them, may presently trample on them; and they, who to-day trembled at their presence, may the morrow scornfully insult upon the memory: *Is this the man* (will they say, as they did of that great king) *who made the earth to tremble; that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the kingdoms thereof?* Since this is the fate of the greatest and most glorious among men, what reason can there be to admire their condition, to prize such vain and short-lived pre-eminences? For who can account it a great

happiness to be styled and respected as a prince, to enjoy all the powers and prerogatives of highest dignity for a day or two ; then being obliged to descend into a sordid and despicable estate ? Who values the fortune of him that is brought forth upon the stage to act the part of a prince ; though he be attired there, and attended as such, hath all the garb and ceremony, the ensigns and appurtenances of majesty about him ; speaks and behaves himself imperiously, is flattered and worshipped accordingly ; yet who in his heart doth adore this idol, doth admire this mockery of greatness ? Why not ? Because after an hour or two the play is over, and this man's reign is done. And what great difference is there between this and the greatest worldly state ? between Alexander in the history, and Alexander on the stage ? Are not (in the Psalmist's account) *all our years spent as a tale that is told*, or as a fable that is acted ? This, in comparison of that, what is it at most but telling the same story, acting the same part a few times over ? What are a few years more than a few hours repeated not very often ? not so often as to make any considerable difference.

SERMON.

THE DANGERS AND MISCHIEF OF
DELAYING REPENTANCE.

Psalm cxix, 60.

I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

VICES NOT EASILY LAID ASIDE.

Virtue is not a mushroom, that springeth up of itself in one night when we are asleep, or regard it not ; but a delicate plant, that groweth slowly and tenderly, needing much pains to cultivate it, much care to guard it, much time to mature it, in our untoward soil, in this world's unkindly weather. Happiness is a thing too precious to be purchased at an easy rate ; heaven is

too high to be come at without much climbing ; the crown of bliss is a prize too noble to be won without a long and a tough conflict. Neither is vice a spirit that will be conjured down by a charm, or with a presto driven away ; it is not an adversary that can be knocked down at a blow, or dispatched with a stab. Whoever shall pretend that at any time, easily with a celerity, by a kind of legerdemain, or by any mysterious knack, a man may be settled in virtue, or converted from vice, common experience abundantly will confute him ; which sheweth that a habit otherwise (setting miracles aside) cannot be produced or destroyed, than by a constant exercise of acts suitable or opposite thereto ; and that such acts cannot be exercised without voiding all impediments, and framing all principles of action (such as temper of body, judgment of mind, influence of custom) to a compliance ; that who by temper is peevish or choleric, cannot, without mastering that temper, become patient or meek ; that who from vain opinions is proud, cannot, without considering away those opinions, prove humble ; that who by custom is grown intemperate, cannot, without weaning himself from that custom, come to be

sober ; that who, from the concurrence of a sorry nature, fond conceits, mean breeding, and scurvy usage, is covetous, cannot, without draining all those sources of his fault, be turned into liberal. The change of our mind is one of the greatest alterations in nature, which cannot be compassed in any way or within any time we please ; but it must proceed on leisurely and regularly, in such order, by such steps, as the nature of things doth permit ; it must be wrought by a resolute and laborious perseverance ; by a watchful application of mind, in voiding prejudices, in waiting for advantages, in attending to all we do ; by forcibly wresting our nature from its bent, and swimming against the current of impetuous desires ; by a patient disentangling ourselves from practices most agreeable and familiar to us ; by a wary fencing with temptations, by long struggling with manifold oppositions and difficulties ; whence the holy scripture termeth our practice a warfare, wherein we are to fight many a bloody battle with most redoubtable foes ; a combat, which must be managed with our best skill and utmost might ; a race, which we must pass through with incessant activity and swiftness.

If, therefore, we mean to be good or to

be happy, it behoveth us to lose no time ; to be presently up at our great task ; to snatch all occasions, to embrace all means incident of reforming our hearts and lives. As those, who have a long journey to go, do take care to set out early, and in their way make good speed, lest the night overtake them before they reach their home ; so, it being a great way from hence to heaven, seeing we must pass over so many obstacles, through so many paths of duty, before we arrive thither, it is expedient to set forward as soon as can be, and to proceed with all expedition ; the longer we stay, the more time we shall need, and the less we shall have.

We may consider, that no future time which we can fix upon will be more convenient than the present is for our reformation. Let us pitch upon what time we please, we shall be as unwilling and unfit to begin as we are now ; we shall find in ourselves the same indispositions, the same averseness, or the same listlessness toward it, as now ; there will occur the like hardships to deter us, and the like pleasures to allure us from our duty ; objects will then be as at present, and will strike as smartly upon our senses ; the case will appear just the same,

and the same pretences for delay will obtrude themselves ; so that we shall be as apt then as now to prorogue the business. We shall say then, to-morrow I will mend ; and when that morrow cometh, it will be still to-morrow ; and so the morrow will prove endless. If, like the simple rustic (who stayed by the river-side waiting till it had done running, so that he might pass dry-foot over the channel), we do conceit that the sources of sin (bad inclinations within, and strong temptations abroad) will of themselves be spent, or fail, we shall find ourselves deluded. If ever we come to take up, we must have a beginning with some difficulty and trouble ; we must courageously break through the present with all its enchantments ; we must undauntedly plunge into the cold stream ; we must rouse ourselves from our bed of sloth ; we must shake off that brutish improvidence, which detaineth us : and why should we not essay it now ? There is the same reason now that ever we can have ; yea, far more reason now ; for if that we now begin, hereafter at any determinate time, some of the work will be done ; what remaineth will be shorter and easier to us.

SERMON.

OF SELF CONCEIT.

2 Tim. iii. 2.

For men shall be lovers of themselves. &c.

IMPERFECTION OF HUMAN
KNOWLEDGE.

If we do reflect either upon the common nature of men, or upon our own constitution, we cannot but find our conceits of our wisdom very absurd: for how can we take ourselves for wise, if we observe the great blindness of our mind, and feebleness of human reason, by many palpable arguments discovering itself? if we mark how painful the search, and how difficult the comprehension is of any truth; how hardly the most

sagacious can descry any thing, how easily the most judicious mistake ; how the most learned everlastingly dispute, and the wisest irreconcilably clash about matters seeming most familiar and facile ; how often the most wary and steady do shift their opinions ; how the wiser a man is, and the more experience he gaineth, the less confident he is in his own judgment, and the more sensible he groweth of his weakness ; how dim the sight is of the most perspicacious, and how shallow the conceptions of the most profound ; how narrow is the horizon of our knowledge, and how immensely the region of our ignorance is distended ; how imperfectly and uncertainly we know those few things to which our knowledge reacheth, how, answerably to such experience, we are told in sacred writ, that *every man is brutish in his knowledge ; that the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity ; that no man would be wise, though he be born like an ass's colt* (that is, he is naturally wild and stupid) *that wisdom is hid from the eyes of all men, and is not found in the land of the living ; that the thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our devices uncertain* : if we, I say, do consider such things, how can we but find it strange that

any man should admire his own wisdom, seeing that he thereby doth exempt himself from the common adjunct of his nature, and forgetteth himself to be a man?

If, also, a man particularly reflecteth on himself, the same practice must needs appear very foolish; for that every man thence may discover in himself peculiar impediments of wisdom; every man in his complexion and in his condition may find things apt to pervert his judgment, and obstruct his acquisition of true knowledge. Is his temper sanguine? thence becometh he quick, rash, credulous, confident and peremptory, slippery and fickle: is it phlegmatic? thence is he slow and heavy; diffident, pertinacious, and stiff in his conceits: his mind is either soft and limber, so as easily to receive the impressions of falsehood speciously represented; or hard and tough, so that he cannot readily admit instruction in truth, or correction of error. His wealth distracteth, or his poverty disturbeth his thoughts; prosperity swelleth his mind up into presumptions and satisfactions, or adversity sinketh it down into unreasonable despondencies and dislikes of things; plenty breedeth sloth, want createth trouble, indisposing him to think well; ease doth rust his parts, and business weareth

them out ; inclination, interest, company, prejudice, do forcibly sway his apprehensions : so that no man can get himself into, or keep himself steady in a perfect balance requisite for exact judgment of things ; no man therefore can obtain a degree of wisdom, whereof he may with any reason be conceited ; the wisest men surely upon such experience have been little satisfied with their share ; *Surely* (saith one) *I am more brutal than any man, and I have not the understanding of a man ;* and, *So foolish* (saith another) *was I, and ignorant ; I was as a beast before thee :* this conceitedness therefore is absurd, and an argument of notable ignorance and folly ; neither is there perhaps any more plain instance or demonstration of general folly reigning among men than this, that commonly we are so blind and stupid as not to discern and resent our own folly : *If any man* (saith St. Paul) *thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth not any thing yet as he ought to know :* that is, if any man conceiteth himself to be considerably wise or intelligent, it is a plain sign that he is very ignorant, and understandeth little to any purpose.

SELF-INTEREST THE SOURCE OF
UNCHARITABLENESS,

SELF-INTEREST is the great source of uncharitableness; for from hence men affect no man otherwise than he seemeth able to serve their turn; the poor, therefore, is ever slighted and neglected by them as unserviceable; the rich only is minded and respected as capable to promote their ends; they become hard-hearted toward others, not considering or commiserating their case; they will part with nothing from themselves to those who need their relief; they delight in nothing which doth not make for their advantage; all their shows of friendship and respect are mercenary, and mere trade; they do nothing *gratis*, or for love.

This is the great root of all the disorders and mischiefs in the world; this self-love prompteth men to those turbulent scramblings and scufflings, whereby good order is confounded; this engageth them to desert their stations, to transgress their bounds, to invade and encroach upon others with fraud and violence: did men with any conscionable moderation mind and pursue their own private interest, all those fierce animosities, those fiery contentions, those bitter

emulations, those rancorous grudges, those calumnious supplantings, those perfidious cozenages, those outrageous violences, those factious confederacies, those seditious murmurings and tumultuous clamours, would vanish and cease; self-interest it is that gives life and nourishment to all such practices, the which embroil the world in discord and disorder. It is not out of pure madness or wanton humour that commonly men engage themselves and others in those base and troublesome courses, but out of design to get by it; hope of gain to be raked out of public ruins and disorders is the principle that moveth them, the reward they propound to themselves for their pains in meddling, toward the promoting them; like those who set fire on the town, that they may get opportunity to rifle and pillage.

He that taketh himself to be as but one man (naturally like and equal to others), conceiving that he ought to consider the interest and right of other men in the same rank with his own, that he in reason should be contented with that share which ariseth to him by fair means; who thence resolveth to be satisfied with his onw lot, to abide quiet in his station, to yield the same deference and compliance to others which he can presume or pretend to receive from them.

who desires only to enjoy the gifts of Providence and the fruits of his industry in a due subordination to the public peace and welfare ; he will not easily strive or struggle for preferments, he will not foment emulations or factions for his advantage, he will never design to cozen or supplant, to detract or calumniate for advancement of his ends ; he thence will not contribute to the mischiefs and troubles in the world.

Self-interest, therefore, is the great enemy to the commonwealth ; that which perverteth all right, which confoundeth all order, which spoileth all the convenience and comfort of society.

I reason, is it not very absurd that any man should look upon himself as more than a single person ; that he should prefer himself before another, to whom he is not in any respect superior ; that he should advance his own concernment above the public benefit, which comprehendeth his good, and without which his good cannot subsist ? Can any man rationally conceive that he can firmly thrive or persist in a quiet and sweet condition, when he graspeth to himself more than is due or fitting, when he provoketh against himself the emulation, the competition, the opposition, the hatred, and obloquy of all or of many other persons ?

INNATE GENEROSITY.

Is there not to all men in some measure, to some men in a higher degree, a generosity innate, most lovely and laudable to all ; which disposeth men with their own pain, hazard, and detriment, to succour and relieve others in distress, to serve the public, and promote the benefit of society ; so that inordinately to regard private interest doth thwart the reason and wisdom of nature ?

The frame of our nature indeed speaketh, that we are not born for ourselves ; we shall find man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler thing than to have been designed to serve himself, or to satisfy his single pleasure ; his endowments are too excellent, his capacities too large, for so mean and narrow purposes. How pitiful a creature were man, if this were all he was made for ! how sorry a faculty were reason, if it served not to better uses ! he debaseth himself, he disgraceth his nature, who hath so low conceits, and pursueth so petty designs.

Nay, even a true regard to our own private good will engage us not inordinately to pursue self-interest ; it being much hugged will be smothered and destroyed.

SERMON.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT
OF ALL MEN.

Rom. xii. 17.

Provide things honest &c.

THE CONTEMPT OF GOODNESS BY
THE WICKED IS FEIGNED.

ONE sober man in defence of virtue is able to discomfit all the hectors, the huffing blades, and boisterous ruffians in the world, attacking them with sound discretion and steady resolution : for all their bravery and confidence, they are easily mated ; and being like their sire, if you *resist them, they will flee from you* : a prudent, seasonable smart check, will quash their spurious courage and giddy audacity. Their contempt of goodness is but feigned ; they cannot really, for their hearts despise it ; there is

stamped on their souls and consciences such a respect, such an awe thereof, which they cannot quite rase out: wherefore if you briskly represent it to them, and challenge their reverence to it, they cannot but succumb, their own mind and conscience joining to back your reproof; so that if, you cannot reclaim them, you shall however repress them; if you cannot correct their vice, you shall yet confound their impudence: *For so (saith St. Peter) it is the will of God; that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; and, Having a good conscience, that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your conversation in Christ.*

It is only a sneaking, or a timorous pretence to virtue, which they contemn; but they will admire those who stiffly adhere to it, and stoutly maintain it.

We shall therefore expose virtue, not by frankly avowing it, but by faintly slinking from it, when occasion requireth an open acknowledgment and exemplary practice of it.

If the world is so very bad, it will not be worse for our attempt to better it; it will be so much at least better, that one therein hath that worthy purpose.

SERMON.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION
ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

1 Tim. iv. 10.

The living God, who is the Saviour of all men
especially of those that believe.

GOD'S GOOD-WILL TOWARDS THE
WORLD.

Thus, for instance, God would have all men
to live together in peace, in order, in health,
conveniently, comfortably, cheerfully; ac-
cording to reason, with virtue and justice;
and in the best state toward happiness; for
this purpose he hath endued them with
reasonable faculties, he hath engraven on
their minds a natural law, he hath furnished
them with all sorts of instruments and helps
conducible to those ends; he promoteth
them by dispensations of providence, and,

probably, by internal influences of grace ; yet often all these means, by the perverseness and stupidity of men, do prove ineffectual, so that wars disorders, diseases, vices, iniquities and oppressions, troubles and miseries, do commonly abound in the world. Likewise God desires, that in his church, knowledge and piety, peace and charity and good order should grow and flourish ; to which purposes he hath appointed teachers to instruct, and governors to watch over his people : he hath obliged each man to advise and admonish his brother ; he hath declared holy precepts and rules of practice ; he hath propounded vast encouragements and rewards, and threatened dreadful punishments : he hath promised and doth afford requisite assistances ; being himself always present and ready to promote ends by his grace : yet notwithstanding, the voluntary neglect and abuse of those means (the guides being blind, negligent, unfaithful ; or the people being indocile, sluggish, refractory ; or both perverted with bad affections), often ignorance, error, and impiety prevail, love is cool and dead, schisms and factions are rife in the church. Which events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-will and good intentions, or to his kind and careful providence toward men ; but we are not-

withstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the author and donor of those good things; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished by man's concurrence and compliance; he having done his part in that due measure and manner which wisdom prompts; having indeed done the same, as when they are effected. So God having expressly declared, that he would have all men to know and embrace the gospel, having made a universal promulgation thereof, having sent forth apostles to disseminate it every where, having obliged every man to confer his best endeavour toward the propagation thereof; if by the want of fidelity, zeal, or industry in them, to whom this care is intrusted, or upon whom this duty is incumbent; or if by the carelessness and stupidity of those who do not regard what is done in the world; or if by men's voluntary shutting their eyes, or stopping their ears (as the Jews did of old to the prophetic instructions and admonitions), God's heavenly truth becometh not universally known, it is not reasonable to impute this default to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design men's instruction and salvation consequent thereon.

T

SERMON.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION
ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

CHRIST'S MANNER OF LIFE

As our Saviour was such to all men by his doctrine, or the general discovery of all saving truth ; so may he be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary practice ; whereby upon the open stage of the world, and in the common view of all that would attend unto him, he did represent a living pattern of all goodness ; by imitating which, we may certainly attain salvation. He that will consider his practice shall find it admirably fitted for general instruction and imitation ; calculated for all places and all sorts of people ; suited to the complexions, to the capacities, to the degrees, to the callings of all men ; so that every sort of men

may from it draw profitable direction, may in it find a copy, even of his particular behaviour : for he was a great Prince, illustrious in birth, excellent in glory, and abounding in all wealth ; yet was born in obscurity, lived without pomp, and seemed to possess nothing ; so teaching men of high rank to be sober, mild, and humble ; not to rest in, not to regard much, not to hug and cling to the accommodations and shows of worldly state ; teaching those of mean degree to be patient, content, and cheerful in their station. He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without bound or measure ; yet made no ostentation of extraordinary knowledge, of sharp wit, of deep subtilty ; did not vent high, dark, or intricate notions ; had in his practice no reaches and windings of craft or policy ; but was in his doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his practice very open and clear ; so that what he commonly said or did, not only philosophers and statesmen, but almost the simplest idiots, might easily comprehend ; so that those might thence learn not to be conceited of their superfluous wisdom : these not to be discouraged in their harmless ignorance ; both having thence an equally sufficient instruction in all true righteousness, a complete direction in the paths to happiness,

being thereby, made wise and learned to salvation. He did not immerse himself in the cares, nor engage himself into the businesses of this world ; yet did not withdraw himself from the company and conversation of men : he retired often from the crowd, that he might converse with God and heavenly things ; he put himself into it, that he might impart good to men, and benefit the world, declining no sort of society ; but indifferently conversing with all ; disputing with the doctors, and eating with the publicans ; whence thereby both men of contemplative and quiet dispositions or vocations, and men of busy spirits, or of active lives, may be guided respectively ; those not to be morose, supercilious, rigid, contemptuous, toward other men ; these not to be so possessed or entangled with the world, as not to reserve some leisure for the culture of their minds, not to employ some care upon the duty of piety and devotion ; both may learn, whether in private retirements, or in public conversation and employment, especially to regard the service of God and the benefit of men : thus was the example of our Lord accommodated for all men ; especially conducting them in the hardest and roughest parts of the way leading to bliss, the acclivities and asperities of duty ; self-

denial, or neglect of worldly glory and fleshly pleasure, patience, humility, general charity ; showing us the possibility of performing such duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through these difficult and dangerous passages, (as a resolute chieftain of life) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beating back, and breaking through all opposite forces, all enemies, all temptations, all obstacles ; enduring painfully the most furious assaults of the world ; boldly withstanding and happily conquering the most malicious rage of hell ; so that victory and salvation we shall be certain of, if we pursue his steps, and do not basely (out of faintness or falsehood) desert so good a leader ; we shall not fail of the unfading crown, if *with patience we run the race that is set before us, looking unto the Captain and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus, who, for the joy proposed unto him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Would it not raise and inflame any courage to see his commander to adventure so boldly upon all hazards, to endure so willingly all hardships ? Whom would not the sight of such a forerunner animate and quicken in his course ; who, by running in the straight way of righteousness with alacrity and con-

stancy, hath obtained himself a most glorious crown, and holdeth forth another like thereto, for the reward of those who follow him? Now as our Lord's doctrine, so did his example, in the nature and design thereof, respect and appertain to all men, it being also like the light of heaven, a common spectacle, a public guide, *to guide our steps in the way of peace*: if it do not appear so, if it do not effectually direct all, it is by accident, and beside God's intention; it is by the fault of them who should propound it, or of them who have not eyes fit or worthy to behold it; briefly what was said concerning the universal revelation of Christian doctrine may be applied to Christ's practice.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY GHOST.

We are vain and uncertain in our opinions, fickle and irresolute in our purposes, slow and heavy in our proceedings; apt to faint and falter, to stumble and slip in all our practices; we do need therefore this sure oracle to consult in our doubts and darkneses; this faithful friend to direct and advise us in our affairs; this constant monitor to rouse and quicken us in our undertakings; this powerful guardian to support

and establish us in our way : it is, in respect to good men, this steady hand that holdeth the helm, and gently steereth their course through the blind tracks of religious practice ; withdrawing them from those dangerous shelves of error and temptation, upon which they are apt to split : it is this heavenly gale, that filleth their sails with constant resolution. and fairly driveth them forward in their voyage toward eternal bliss. He softly doth whisper and insinuate good thoughts into us ; doth kindle pious desires, doth cherish virtuous intentions, doth promote honest endeavours ; he seasonably checketh and restraineth us from sin ; he faithfully reproveth and upbraideth us for committing it ; he raiseth wholesome remorse, shame, and displeasure for our unworthiness and folly ; he sweetly warmeth our cold affections, inflaming our hearts with devotion toward God ; he qualificeth us, and encourageth us to approach the throne of grace, breeding in us faith and humble confidence, prompting us fit matter of request, becoming our advocate and intercessor for the good success of our prayers : *Through Christ Jesus (saith St. Paul) we have access by one Spirit unto the Father ; and, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities ; for we know not what we should ask for as we ought ; but the Spirit itself intercedeth for us.*

SERMON.

A DEFENCE OF THE BLESSED TRINITY.

Coloss. iii, 2.

Set your affections on things above.

THE HOLY TRINITY.

The sacred Trinity may be considered either as it is in itself wrapt up in unexplicable folds of mystery ; or as it hath discovered itself operating in wonderful methods of grace towards us.

As it is in itself, it is an object too bright and dazzling for our weak eye to fasten upon, an abyss too deep for our short reason to fathom : I can only say, that we are so bound to mind it, as to exercise our faith, and express our humility, in willingly believing, in submissively adoring those high mysteries which are revealed in the holy oracles concerning it, by that Spirit itself, *which searcheth the depths of God*, and by that only Son of God, who residing in his Father's bosom, hath thence brought them forth, and *expounded them* to us, so far as was fit for our capacity and use : and the lectures so read by the eternal *wisdom*

of *God*, the propositions uttered by the mouth of *truth itself*, we are obliged with a docile ear, and a credulous heart, to entertain.

That there is one Divine Nature or Essence, common unto three persons incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished ; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations ; all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different from other in order and manner of subsistence ; that there is a mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one ; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant ; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession, without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence ; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence : these are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree, but should not stagger our faith in assenting that they are true ; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with disposition to admire, veiling our faces in the presence, and prostrating our reason at the feet of wisdom so far transcending us.

SERMON.

ON THE EVIL AND UNREASONABLENESS
OF INFIDELITY.

Heb. ii. 12.

Take heed brethren lest there be in many of you
an evil heart of unbelief.

INFIDELITY.

God by his providence doth offer means and motives inducing to belief, by the promulgation of his gospel, and exhortation of his ministers: but all such methods infidelity doth void and frustrate; *thrusting away the word, turning away the ear from the truth, letting the seed fall beside us, casting away the law of the Lord of hosts*; in effect (as those in Job) *saying to God, Depart*

from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

God by his grace *doth shine upon our hearts*, doth attract our wills to compliance with his will, doth excite our affections to relish his truth ; but infidelity doth *resist his Spirit*, doth quench the heavenly light, doth smother all the suggestions and motions of divine grace within us.

What God asserteth, infidelity denieth, questioning his veracity : What God commandeth, infidelity doth not approve, contesting his wisdom ; what God promiseth, infidelity will not confide in, distrusting his fidelity, or his power : such is its behaviour (so injurious, so rude, so foolish) toward God and his truth ; this briefly is its nature, manifestly involving great pravity, iniquity and impiety.



SLOTH A SOURCE OF INFIDELITY.

ANOTHER source of infidelity is sloth, which indisposeth men to undergo the fatigue of seriously attending to the doctrine propounded, of examining its grounds, of weighing the reasons inducing to believe ; whence

at first hearing, if the notions hap not to hit their fancy, they do slight it before they fully understand it, or know its grounds ; thence at least they must needs fail of a firm and steady belief, the which can alone be founded on a clear apprehension of the matter, and perception of its agreeableness to reason : so when the Athenians did hear St. Paul declaring the grand points of faith, somewhat in his discourse uncouth to their conceit falling from him, some of them did scorn, others did neglect his doctrine ; *some mocked ; others said, We will hear thee again of this matter ;* so Agrippa was *almost persuaded to be a Christian*, but had not the industry to prosecute his enquiry till he arrived to a full satisfaction. A solid faith (with a clear understanding and firm persuasion) doth indeed, no less than any science require sedulous and persevering study : so that as a man can never be learned, who will not be studious : so a sluggard cannot prove a good believer.

Infidelity arises from stupidity, or dulness of apprehension (I mean not that which is natural : for any man in his senses, how low soever otherwise in parts or improvements, is capable to understand the Christian doctrine, and to perceive reason sufficient to convince him of its truth) but contracted by volun-

tary indispositions and defects ; a stupidity rising from the mists of prejudice, from the steams of lust and passion, from the rust grown on the mind by want of exercising it in observing and comparing things ; whence men cannot apprehend the clearest notions plainly represented to them, nor discern the force of arguments, however evident and cogent ; but are like those wizards in Job, *who meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope at noonday, as in the night.*



BAD JUDGMENT A CAUSE OF INFIDELITY.

ANOTHER cause of infidelity is a bad judgment : corrupted with prejudicate notions and partial inclinations to falsehood. Men are apt to entertain prejudices favourable to their natural appetites and humours ; to their lusts, to their present interests ; dictating to them, that wealth, dignity, fame, pleasure, ease, are things most desirable, and necessary ingredients of happiness ; so that it is a sad thing in any case to want them : all men have strong inclinations

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biassing them toward such things ; it is a hard thing to shake off such prejudices, and to check such inclinations ; it is therefore not easy to entertain a doctrine representing such things indifferent, obliging us sometimes to reject them, always to be moderate in the pursuit and enjoyment of them : wherefore infidelity will naturally spring up in a mind not cleansed from those corruptions of judgment.



PRIDE A GRAND CAUSE OF INFIDELITY.

A GRAND cause of infidelity is pride, the which doth interpose various bars to the admission of Christian truth ; for before a man can believe, *every height* (every towering imagination and conceit) *that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God must be cast down.*

Pride fills a man with vanity and an affectation of seeming wise in special manner above others, thereby disposing him to maintain paradoxes, and to nauseate common truths received and believed by the generality of mankind.

He that is wise in his own conceit, will hug that conceit, and thence is incapable to learn : *there is* (saith Solomon) *more hope of a fool than of him* ; and he that affecteth the praise of men, will not easily part with it for the sake of truth : whence, *How* (saith our Lord) *can ye believe, who receive glory one of another ?* how can ye, returning such affections, be disposed to avow yourselves to have been ignorants and fools, whereas ye were reputed for learned and wise ? how can ye endure to become novices, who did pass for doctors ? how can ye allow yourselves so blind and weak, as to have been deceived in your former judgment of things ?

He that is conceited of his own wisdom, strength of parts, and improvement in knowledge, cannot submit his mind to notions which he cannot easily comprehend and penetrate ; he will scorn to have his understanding baffled or puzzled by sublime mysteries of faith ; he will not easily yield any thing too high for his wit to reach, or too knotty for him to unloose : *How can these things be ?* what reason can there be for this ? I cannot see how this can be true ; this point is not intelligible : so he treateth the dictates of faith ; not considering the feebleness and shallowness of his own rea-

son : Hence, *not many wise men according to the flesh* (or who were conceited of their own wisdom, relying upon their natural faculties and means of knowledge), not many scribes, or *disputers of this world*, did embrace the Christian truth, it appearing absurd and foolish to them ; it being needful that a man should *be a fool, that he might, in this regard, become wise.*

The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing human conceit, and to the exclusion of all glorying in ourselves ; referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty, and grace : it representeth all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves : such notions proud hearts cannot digest ; they cannot like to avow their infirmities, their defects, their wants, their vileness, and unworthiness ; their distresses and miseries : they cannot endure to be entirely and absolutely beholden to favour and mercy for their happiness. Such was the case of the Jews ; who could not believe, because, *going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit to the righteousness of God. Dextra mihi Deus,*

every proud man would say with the profane Mezentius.

Christianity doth also much disparage and vilify those things, for which men are apt much to prize and pride themselves ; it maketh small account of wealth, of honour, of power, of wit, of secular wisdom, of any human excellency or worldly advantage : it levelleth the rich and the poor, the prince and the peasant, the philosopher and idiot, in spiritual regards ; yea, far preferreth the meanest and simplest person endued with true piety, above the mightiest and wealthiest, who is devoid thereof : in the eye of it, *the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*, whatever he be in worldly regard or state. This a proud man cannot support : to be divested of his imaginary privileges, to be thrown down from his perch of eminency, to be set below those whom he so much despiseth, is insupportable to his spirit.

Christianity doth also indispensably require duties, point blank opposite to pride : it placeth humility among its chief virtues as a foundation of piety ; it enjoineth us to think meanly of ourselves, to disclaim our own worth and desert, to have no complacency or confidence in any thing belonging to us ; not to aim at high things ; to waive

the regard and praise of men ; it exacteth from us a sense of our vileness, remorse and contrition for our sins, with humble confession of them, self-condemnation and abhorrence ; it chargeth us to bear injuries and affronts patiently, without grievous resentment, without seeking or so much as wishing any revenge ; to undergo disgraces, crosses, disasters, willingly and gladly ; it obligeth us *to prefer others before ourselves*, sitting down in the lowest room, yielding to the meanest persons : to all which sorts of duty a proud mind hath an irreconcilable antipathy.

A proud man, that is big and swollen with haughty conceit and stomach, cannot stoop down so low, cannot shrink into himself so much, as *to enter into the strait gate, or to walk in the narrow way, which leadeth to life* : he will be apt to contemn wisdom and instruction.

Shall I, will he say, such a gallant as I, so accomplished in worth, so flourishing in dignity, so plump with wealth, so highly regarded and renowned among men, thus pitifully crouch and sneak ? shall I deign to avow such beggarly notions, or bend to such homely duties ? shall I disown my perfections, or forego my advantages ? shall I

profess myself to have been a despicable worm, a villanous caitiff, a sorry wretch? shall I suffer myself to be floated as a timorous religionist, a scrupulous precisian, a conscientious sneaksby? shall I lie down at the foot of mercy, puling in sorrow, whining in confession, bewailing my guilt, and craving pardon? shall I allow any man better or happier than myself? shall I receive those into consortship, or equality of rank with me, who appear so much my inferiors? shall I be misused and trampled on, without doing myself right, and making them smart who shall presume to wrong or cross me? shall I be content to be nobody in the world? So the proud man will say in his heart, contesting the doctrines and duties of our religion, and so disputing himself into infidelity.



EFFECTS OF INFIDELITY.

THE naughtiness of infidelity will appear by considering its effects and consequences; which are plainly a spawn of all vices and villanies, a deluge of all mischiefs and outrages upon the earth : for faith being removed,

together with it, all conscience goeth, no virtue can remain ; all sobriety of mind, all justice in dealing, all security in conversation, are packed away ; nothing resteth to encourage men unto any good, or restrain them from any evil : all hopes of reward from God, all fears of punishment from him, being discarded, No principle, or rule of practice is left, beside brutish sensuality, fond self-love, private interest, in their highest pitch, without any bound or curb ; which therefore will dispose men to do nothing but to prey on each other with all cruel violence and base treachery. Every man thence will be a god to himself, a fiend to each other ; so that necessarily the world will thence be turned into a chaos and a hell, full of iniquity and impurity, of spite and rage, of misery and torment. It depriveth each man of all hope from Providence, all comfort and support in affliction, of all satisfaction in conscience ; of all the good things which faith doth yield.

SERMON.
OF THE VIRTUE AND REASONABLENESS
OF FAITH.
2. Peter, i. 1.

To them that have obtained like precious faith
with us.

FAITH FOUNDED ON THE TESTIMONY
OF GOD.

FAITH hath this excellent advantage, that it endueth us with such knowledge in a very clear and sure way, comparable to that whereby the theorems of any science are known ; it not being grounded on any slippery deduction of reason, nor on slender conjectures of fancy, nor on musty traditions or popular rumours ; but upon the infalli-

ble testimony of God, conveyed unto us by powerful evidence, striking all capacities, apt with equal influence to enlighten the simple and to convince the wise. For want of this, all human wisdom was so blind and lame ; so various, so uncertain ; nothing but confusion, unsettlement, and dissatisfaction, arising from mere ratiocination ; which, being destitute of light and aid from heaven, doth ever grope in the dark, doth rove after shadows of truth, is bewildered in mazes of intricacy, wherein things lie involved : whence all philosophy did consist in faint guesses, plausible discourses, and endless disputes about matters of highest consequence, such as the original of the world, the administration of human things, the nature and subsistence of our soul, the way to happiness ; none being able about such points to conclude with resolution, or to assert with confidence ; so that in effect all the philosophers might be ranged under one great sect of *sceptics*, or *seekers*, the most advised and best disposed among them, in result of their most diligent speculations, appearing very doubtful.

But we have, as St. Peter saith, *a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to give heed, as unto a lamp shining in*

a dark place, guiding us in the obscurities and uncertainties of life ; we have *a hope*, as *an anchor of the soul both sure and stable* ; which stayeth and settleth our mind, being tossed with winds and waves of uncertain cogitations, suggested by different appearances of things.

Hence, as St. Chrysostom is wont to insist, by virtue of faith, rustic and mechanic idiots do in true knowledge surpass the most refined wits, and children prove wiser than old philosophers ; an idiot can tell us that which a learned infidel doth not know ; a child can assure us that wherein a deep philosopher is not resolved ; for ask a boor, ask a boy educated in our religion, who made him, he will tell you, God Almighty ; which is more than Aristotle or Democritus would have told : demand of him why he was made, he will answer you, to serve and glorify his Maker ; and hardly would Pythagoras or Plato have replied so wisely : examine him concerning his soul, he will aver that it is immortal, that it shall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it shall abide in a state of bliss or misery everlasting ; about which points neither Socrates nor Seneca could assure any thing : inquire of him how things are upheld, how governed

and ordered, he presently will reply, by the powerful hand and wise providence of God ; whereas among philosophers, one would ascribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune ; one to blind influences of stars, another to a confused jumble of atoms : pose him about the main points of morality and duty ; and he will in few words better inform you than Cicero, or Epictetus, or Aristotle, or Plutarch, in their large tracts and voluminous discourses about matters of that nature.

So real a property it is of God's law *to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion* ; so true it is, that our Lord affirmeth of himself, *I came a light into the world, that he who believeth in me may not abide in darkness* ; so justly doth St. Paul affirm concerning divine revelation, *that it is able to make a man wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus* ; being *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness* : *that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*. This is that high way of holiness, of which the prophet saith, *the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein*. Thus is faith in its nature honourable.

FAITH SUPPORTED BY REASON.

It was a foul aspersion cast upon our religion by its ancient opposers, that it did require *a mere belief, void reason*, challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof. This suggestion, if true, were, I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man indeed justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms : but it is really a gross calumny ; such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our religion, being repugnant to the nature and tenor thereof ; being prejudicial to its interest and design ; being contrary to its use and practice. Never any religion was indeed so little liable to the censure of obtruding itself on men's credulity, none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason ; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences ; yea provoked them for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage), to a fair, discreet, careful examination thereof. Other religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of ancestors ; custom and prescription of times ; large extent and pre-

valence among crews of people ; establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments extrinsical, and of small validity in any case), declining all other test and verdict of reason : but our religion confideth in itself, and the pure merit of its course ; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth ; referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person.

It indeed ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and choosing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, until, after a competent time and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other : God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man of its truth, who is not affectedly blind and stupid, or wantonly

slothful and careless, or frowardly stiff and obstinate.

What indeed better arguments (considering the nature of the objects which faith respecteth, being things spiritual and invisible; considering also the capacities of persons concerned, being all sorts of people, wise and simple, learned and rude) could we have, or could we need, than the conspicuous excellency and usefulness of the doctrine, approving itself to the mind, and confirming itself by palpable experience of most happy fruits, springing from a practice conformable thereto! than its exact correspondence to manifold ancient presignifications and predictions concerning it; than special attestations of God thereto, not only by audible voices, and visible apparitions from heaven, but also by innumerable miraculous works; than the concurrence of Divine Providence in strange methods to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the blessings and consolations, attending a faithful observance of it? what subtilty of discourse, what charm of eloquence, could serve to evince and impress the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands, and promises of God; concerning the immortal subsistence of our soul, the

future judgment, the everlasting rewards hereafter, with such evidence and such force, to the common and vulgar reason, or indeed to any reason of man, as do these plain arguments, needing no reach of wit or depth of judgment to sound their meaning, or feel their strength?

But if any man be too wise to be pleased with such down-right and easy ways of conviction, reason itself, well followed, would lead him hither, and serve to produce faith in him; for that there is a God, reason, from observance of appearances in nature and providence, will collect; that goodness is one of his principal attributes, reason from the same grounds will infer; that God hath an especial regard to men will thence also become notorious; that consequently God will vouchsafe his guidance to men in their way toward happiness, will appear reasonable to conceive; that God hath not done this in any other way, reason, comparing and weighing things, will easily discern; that Christian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reason soon will admit; so hath reason led us to the door of faith, and being arrived thither, will (if our will be not averse) easily find entrance.

Hence God doth not only allow, but en-

joins us, to use our best reason in judging of this doctrine, whether it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance ; he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to shut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it ; but chargeth us to go into the clearest light ; to open our eyes wide, to view it thoroughly with our best senses and sharpest attention, before we do yield our consent and approbation to it : his precepts are that *we examine all things, and hold fast that which is good* ; that we *believe not every spirit* (or revelation pretended), but *try the spirits, whether they be of God* ; that we stand on our guard, and *take heed that no man deceive us* ; that we *be not fools, nor children in understanding* ; but *wise, and perfect men* ; that we *compare things different, and try what is well pleasing to God* ; that we *be always ready with meekness and modesty to render unto every man demanding it an account of the hope in us.*

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FAITH NECESSARY IN WORLDLY AFFAIRS.

Even in common life, faith is the compass

by which men steer their practice, and the main spring of action, setting all the wheels of our activity going; every man acteth with serious intention, and with vigour answerable to his persuasion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours. What moveth the husbandman to employ so much care, toil, and expense in manuring his ground, in ploughing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it, but a persuasion that he shall reap a crop, which in benefit will answer all? What stirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vast and dangerous seas, adventuring his stock, abandoning his ease, exposing his life to the waves, to the rocks and shelves, to storms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates, to sweltering heats and piercing colds, but a persuasion, that wealth is a very desirable thing, and that thereby he may acquire it? What induceth a man to conform unto strictest rules of diet and abstinence, readily to swallow down the most unsavoury potions, patiently to endure cuttings and burnings, but a faith that he shall thereby recover and preserve health, that highly valuable good? From the same principle are all the carking, all the plodding, all the drudging, all the daring, all the

scuffling in the world easily derivable. In like manner is faith the square and the source of our spiritual activity, disposing us seriously to undertake, earnestly, resolutely, industriously, and constantly, to pursue the designs of virtue and piety, brooking the pains and hardships, breaking through the difficulties and hazards, which occur in religious practice; engaging us to the performance of duty, deterring us from the commission of sin.

What but faith, eyeing *the prize*, will quicken us *to run patiently the race that is set before us*? what but faith, apprehending *the crown*, will animate us *to fight stoutly the good fight*? what but faith assuring the wages, will support us in working all the day with unwearied industry and patience? what can raise pious hope, what can kindle holy desire, what spur on conscientious endeavour, but faith of attaining worthy recompenses for doing well? what can impress an effectual dislike and dread of offending, but a faith of incurring grievous punishment and sad mischief thence.

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD.

BUT you perhaps will interpose, and say, These are indeed fine sayings, but where do

such effects appear? who, I pray, doth practise according to these notions? where is that gallant to be found, who doth work so great exploits? where may we discern that height of piety, that tenderness of charity, that meek comportment with injuries and affronts, that clear sincerity, that depth of humility, that strictness of temperance, that perfect contentedness, and undisturbed calmness of mind, that stoutness of courage and stiffness of patience, which you talk of as the undoubted issues of faith? who is the man that with such glee doth hug afflictions, or biddeth adversity so welcome to his home? where dwell they who so little regard this world, or so much affect the other? do we not see men as if they were wild after preferment, wealth, and pleasure? what do they else, but scrape and scramble and scuffle for these things? doth not every man moan the scantness of his lot, doth not every man flinch at any trouble, doth not every one with all his might strive to rid himself of any thing disgusting to his sense or fancy? Are not therefore such encomiums of faith mere speculations, or brave rhodomontades of divinity?

The objection, I confess, is a shrewd one; but I must reply to it: You say, Where are

such effects? where are such men? I ask then, Where is faith? where are believers? show me the one and I will show you the other: if such effects do not appear, it is no argument that faith cannot produce them, but a sign that faith is wanting; as, if a tree doth not put forth in due season, we conclude that the root is dead; if a fountain yield no streams, we suppose it dried up: *Show me* (saith St. James) *thy faith by thy Works*; implying, if good works do not shine forth in the conversation, it is suspicious there is no true faith in the heart: for such faith is not a feeble weening, or a notion swimming in the head; it is not a profession issuing from the mouth; it is not following such a garb, or adhering to such a party: but a persuasion fixed in the heart by good reason, by firm resolution, by lively sense: it is *with the heart* (as St. Paul saith) *man believeth unto righteousness*; that is the faith we speak of, and to which we ascribe the production of so worthy and great effects: if a man wanteth that, attested by practice suitable, though he know all the points exactly, though he readily will say *amen* to every article of the Creed, though he wear all the badges of a Christian, though he frequent the congregations, and comply with

the forms of our religion, yet is he really an infidel : for is he not an infidel who denieth God ? and is he not such a renegado who liveth impiously ? He is so in St. Paul's account ; for *They profess* (saith he of such persons) *that they know God, but in works they deny him* ; and, *He is yet a Jew*, saith the same apostle (he is not a Christian, may we by parity of reason affirm) *who is one outwardly ; but he is a Christian who is one inwardly, and faith is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God* : we may attribute to a barren conceit, or to a formal profession, the name of faith, but it is an equivocal or wide sense ; as a dead man is called a man, or a dry stick resting in the earth a tree ; for so *faith* (saith St. James) *without works is dead* ; is indeed but a trunk, or carcass of faith, resembling it in outward shape, but void of its *spirit* and life.

SERMON.

ON THE CREED.

GOD THE FATHER OF ALL THINGS.

CONSIDERING this point will direct and prompt us how to behave ourselves towards all God's creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities : if God be the Father of all things, they are all thence in some sort our brethren, and so may claim from us a fraternal affection and demeanour answerable thereto. Shall we then scorn, abuse, trample or tyrannise over any of them ? doth it become us to do so ? will our common Father like it, or endure it ? If we are all branches sprouting from one stock, or streams issuing from the same source of Divine beneficence and fecundity ; if we are members of one body, of one commonwealth of one family, we are then surely obliged to

a universal benevolence ; to be kind and compassionate, to be helpful and beneficial unto all, so far as our capacity reacheth ; we are to endeavour, as far as we can, to preserve the order and promote the welfare of the world and of all things in it : even upon this score, the meanest of God's creatures is not to be despised, the vilest worm is not to be mis-used by us ; since even it is the work of his hands, and the subject of his care, yea the object of his kindness, *who* (as the Psalmist telleth us) *is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works*, but especially towards those beings, who according to a more peculiar and excellent sense are entitled the sons of our Father, and to whom we are more nearly allied by our better part (that Divine breath, which both they and we drew from God,) toward all intellectual beings, we do learn hence our respective duties : of love and respect toward those our elder brethren, the angels (those of them which have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty ;) of charity and good-will toward each other ; which if we do not maintain, we may consider that we thereby are first undutiful and unkind to God our common Father, and then even to ourselves ; we do hate and harm

both God's relations and our own (God's children, and our brethren) by hating or harming any man whatever ; especially any good man, any Christian brother ; who by other more peculiar bands is straitly tied to us ; who upon so many better and higher accounts standeth related unto God and to ourselves. Aristotle saith that all men, upon grounds of natural cognation and similitude, are naturally friends to one another ; much more are all good men so by participation of a more excellent nature, and by a nobler resemblance ; whence it is St. Paul's precepts to Christians, that they should *bear a natural affection each to other in brotherly love* : Christians are in a more peculiar and eminent manner styled brethren ; and that charity, which in respect to others is called *philanthropy* (or humanity), in regard to them is named *philadelphia* (or brotherly affection :) hence to perform all fraternal offices toward every Christian, to wish heartily and earnestly to promote his good, to compassionate, and, as we are able, to relieve his evils, to bear his infirmities, and to comport with unkindnesses from him, and the like duties, are incumbent on us, as peculiar to our profession.

SERMON.

OF THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN
RELIGION.

1 Cor, ii, 6.

Speak wisdom to those which are perfect.

DIVINE QUALITIES OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

CONSIDER we next the precepts by which our religion doth regulate our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren (so it styleth all men, intimating thence the duties it requireth us to perform toward them;) and what directions in that kind can be imagined comparably so good, so useful, as those which the gospel affordeth? An honest pagan historian saith of the Christian profession, that *nil nisi justum suadet et lenē*; the which is a true, though not full, character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we should sincerely and tenderly love one another, should earnestly desire and delight in each other's good, should

heartily sympathize with all the evils and sorrows of our brethren, should be ready to yield them all the help and comfort we are able, being willing to part with our substance, our ease, our pleasure, for their benefit or succour ; not confining this our charity to any sorts of men, particularly related or affected toward us ; but, in conformity to our heavenly Father's boundless goodness, extending it to all ; that we should mutually bear one another's burdens, and bear with one another's infirmities, mildly resent and freely remit all injuries, all discourtesies done unto us ; retaining no grudge in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting them with good wishes and good deeds. It chargeth us to be quiet and orderly in our stations, diligent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright in our dealings, observant of our relations, obedient and respectful toward our superiors, meek and gentle to our inferiors ; modest and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our conversation, candid and benign in our censures, innocent and inoffensive, yea, courteous and obliging, in all our behaviour toward all persons. It commandeth us to root out of our hearts all spite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtiness, all evil suspicion and jealousy ; to restrain our

tongue from all slander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harsh language ; to banish from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt, may needlessly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the public good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our ease or pleasure ; rather discarding a less good from ourselves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or estimate the benefits that spring from the practice of these duties, either to the man that observeth them, or to all men in common ? O divinest Christian charity, what tongue can worthily describe thy most heavenly beauty, thy incomparable sweetness, thy more than royal clemency and bounty ! How nobly dost thou enlarge our minds beyond the narrow sphere of self and private regard, into a universal care and complaisance, making every man ourself, and all concernments to be ours ! how dost thou entitle us unto, how dost thou invest us in, all the goods imaginable ; dost enrich us with the wealth, dost prefer us with the honour, dost adorn us with the wisdom and the virtue, dost bless us with all the prosperity of the world, whilst all our neighbour's goods, by our rejoicing therein, becometh our

own ! How dost thou raise a man above the reach of all mischiefs and disasters, of all troubles and griefs, since nothing can disturb or discompose that soul, wherein thou dost constantly reside and absolutely reign ! How easily dost thou, without pain or hazard, without drawing blood or striking a stroke, render him that enjoyeth thee an absolute conqueror over all his foes, triumphant over all injuries without, and all passions within ; for that he can have no enemy who will be a friend to all, and nothing is able to cross him who is disposed to take every thing well ! How sociable, how secure, how pleasant a life might we lead under thy kindly governance ! What numberless sorrows and troubles, fears and suspicions, cares and distractions of mind at home, what tumults and tragedies abroad, might be prevented, if men would but hearken to thy mild suggestions ! What a paradise would this world then become, in comparison to what it now is, where, thy good precepts and advices being neglected, uncharitable passions and unjust desires are predominant ! How excellent then is that doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven, and, would but men embrace thee, the peace and joy of heaven with thee !

SERMON.

THAT JESUS IS THE TRUE MESSIAS.

Acts ix. 22.

Proving that Jesus is the Christ.

THE EARLY AND RAPID TRIUMPH
OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his gospel in its conveyance and propagation : its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest opposition, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of itself, accomplished by means to all appearance so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of Providence against the course of human affairs, than the rest per-

formed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power of natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency ; the work was *a victory over the world* and over hell, achieved *by the faith of Jesus* ; and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause itself, which they maintained for him.

There were *not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but* a very few, mean and poor, unlearned and simple men, whom no outward circumstances commended to human regard, no worldly advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to support them in their endeavours : a few, fishermen, publicans, and tent-makers, and other persons of like quality, education, improvement, and capacity, were the instruments of this great work ; those brave soldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array against all his adversaries : and what adversaries were they ? who but all the majesty and authority, all the force and violence, all the policy and craft, all the wit, learning wisdom, and eloquence all the passion and

rage of men, all the power, cunning, and malice of the cursed spirits ; in short, all the forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined against them. They were to check and control the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty emperors and potentates ; whose assumed divine honours, they decried as vain and wicked ; whose commands they reprehended as unjust and impious ; to whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints, declaring them obliged to contain their practice within the bounds of piety, equity and temperance : they were to suppress the credit and the gain of all priests or ministers of religion in the world, whose doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose practices they reprov'd as vile and damnable : they were to confute all the subtilty of philosophers, all the eloquence of orators, all depths of learning, and improvements of reason or wit : impugning the opinions famous and current among men as false, or slighting them as frivolous : they were to overbear and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by natural inclination and temper, by countenance of long tradition and custom ; by education, by public laws, and all so mighty enforcements : they were to charge with reproach all ages past, and the ancestors of all people in the world

(those of one small people only in part excepted), of very gross ignorance and error, of sottish folly, of heinous wickedness and impiety ; they were to sustain all the slanders, reproaches and persecutions which the resolute, opposing so many interests, humours, and opinions, inevitably would produce : they were besides vigorously to assault Satan and all his complices ; to beat down his worship, and overturn his domination ; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

All these great exploits they were to achieve in a most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most plain and simple, without any terror or tumult, any sleight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or subtilty of reasoning ; without applying either any rude violence or sly allurements ; they were indeed little more than barely to report a story, and to affirm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in connection with that story some plain honest rules of life here in this world and denouncing some consequences on the belief of their story and the practice of their rules in another world hereafter. These things it was their business to tell simply, and to aver confidently, charging men at their utmost peril to believe them ; boldly condemning whatever thing

and what person soever should oppose their report or doctrine : they were not to assay the persuading this, or dissuading from the contrary, by fine strains of speech, or with acute *enthymemes* ; but to propose it without care or circumstance, in such a homely dress and naked plainness of speech, that even children and idiots might easily comprehend the main of their sense and drift : all the strength, the ornament, the charm of their discourse, consisted in the clear sincerity shining through it ; joined with a constant adherence to their doctrine, an earnest diligence in promoting it, an admirable patience in joyfully suffering all contumelies and adversities incident to them for its sake ; accompanied also with a blameless innocence and integrity of life, a sweet calmness of mind and meekness of behaviour, together with a kind and charitable disposition toward all men : these were all the human or natural *weapons of their warfare* ; with which alone, God's help concurring, they did (to use St. Paul's words) *pull down strong holds, and cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God ; bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* : in this strange manner did they maintain their cause :

A cause, indeed, of itself, which did not seem likely to prosper in the world, having in itself so little of plausibility, and affording to the embracers thereof so very small encouragement : which enjoined to its followers the worship and imitation of a person lying under extreme disadvantages in the eye of man ; who had lived in a very mean condition, and had suffered a most ignominious death ; whom, therefore, to be obliged to adore, and obey, could not but to the ordinary sense of men appear very offensive : which again recommended a doctrine little grateful, or rather very cross, to the natural propensions, to the current principles, to the secular advantages of men ; which indulged men in nothing that they were apt to like, but greatly curbed and checked them in the use of their liberties, gratification of their fancies, and enjoyment of their pleasures ; which much disparaged all the pleasing goods, and all the flattering glories of the world ; charging men never much to affect or seek them, sometimes utterly to quit and renounce them ; freely choosing in their stead to undertake a cross with all its pains and disgraces, which propounded it as an essential ingredient of itself, or a condition necessary for all that

should avow it, to *circumcise the heart*, to *mortify the deeds of the body*, to *crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts* : to *cut off right hands*, and *pull out right eyes* : to part with all their fortunes, to hate their relations, to sacrifice their lives, if they were thereto called, for its sake ; which rendered men, as it were, dead to all present fructions, and unconcerned in all hopes here ; engaging them entirely to place their contents and happiness in a reversion of things invisible and future : they, in fine, did hold forth a doctrine to the sense of flesh and blood full of most rigid laws, severe rules, harsh conditions, and *hard sayings*, apt to choke the faith of men, and to obstruct its entertainment with them.

Now, that a handful of such persons, against such obstacles, in ways so preposterous, and different from the course of human proceedings, were able to render so unlikely a cause so absolutely victorious ; so that suddenly all the might, wit, and eloquence of men, did stoop unto it, and serve under it ; that the majesty of the greatest princes gladly veiled thereto, that the prudence of statesmen cordially did approve it, that all the learning of the world yielded itself up captive and tributary there

to, that all superstition vanished before it, and all the force of hell sunk under it ; is it not a huge argument, that God himself did in favour thereof interpose his omnipotent arm ; that to the Lord of hosts (*unto whom, as king Asa said, it is nothing to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power : to whom it is indifferent to save by many or by few*) this glorious victory is to be ascribed, who thereby was pleased to accomplish his ancient promises, to maintain his holy truth, to further the salvation of his creatures, to promote his own glory, and especially to magnify the name of his only beloved Son Jesus, our ever blessed Lord ? *to whom for ever and ever be all praise. Amen.*

SERMON.
ON CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

1, Cor. i. 28.

But we preach Christ crucified.

SINNERS THE REAL PERSECUTORS OF
CHRIST.

WHAT detestation of our sins must the serious consideration of this event produce in us! of our sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches on our blessed Redeemer! Judas the wretch who betrayed him, the Jewish priests who did accuse and prosecute him, the wicked rout which abused and insulted over him, those cruel hands that smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorned him, those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled him, all those who any-

wise were instruments or abettors of his affliction, how do we loathe them ! how do we detest and curse their memories ! But how much greater reason have we to abominate our sins, which were the principal causes of all that woful tragedy ! *He was delivered for our offences* ; they were indeed the traitors, which by the hands of Judas delivered him up : *He that knew no sin was made sin for us* ; that is, was accused, was condemned, was executed as a sinner for us : it was therefore we who by our sins did impeach him ; the spiteful priests were but our advocates ; we by them did adjudge and sentence him ; Pilate (against his will and conscience) was but our spokesman ; we by him did inflict that horrid punishment on him ; the Roman executioners were but our agents therein : *He became a curse for us* ; that is, all the mockery, derision, and contumely he endured did proceed from us ; the silly people were but properties, acting our parts ; our sins were they that cried out *Crucifige ! (Crucify him ! crucify him !)* with clamours more loud and more effectual than did all the Jewish rabble ; it was they which by the borrowed throats of that base people did so outrageously persecute him : *He was wounded for our transgressions, and*

bruised for our iniquities ; it was they which by the hands of the fierce soldiers and of the rude populace, as by senseless engines, did buffet and scourge him ; they by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh and rend his sacred body : upon them therefore it is most just and fit that we should turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indignation.

And what in reason can be more powerful to the breeding in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins ? how can we but earnestly grieve, when we consider ourselves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the murderers of a person so innocent and lovely, of one so great and glorious, of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of our own best friend, and most kind Saviour !

If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby melt us into contrition, yet surely this consideration must needs produce some fear within us ; for can we at least otherwise than tremble to think upon the heinous guilt of our sins, upon the fierceness of God's wrath against them, upon the severity of divine judgment for them, all so manifestly discovered, all so livelily set forth in this

dismal spectacle ! If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in us some terror, some dread of the law, some reverence toward authority, what awful impressions should this singular example of divine justice work upon us ! How greatly we should be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the most inanimate creatures : the whole world did seem affected thereat with horror ; the frame of things was disturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it ; the sun (as out of aversion or shame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackness ; the bowels of the earth did yearn and quake ; the rocks were rent ; the vail of the temple was torn quite through ; graves did open, and the bodies did wake : and can we (who are most concerned) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsy than buried carcasses, the most insensible and immoveable things in nature ?

**THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST SHOULD
RECONCILE US TO AFFLICTION.**

WHAT can be more operative than this consideration toward breeding a disregard of.

this world, with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous delights ; toward reconciling our minds to the worst condition it can bring us into ; toward supporting our hearts under the heaviest pressures of affliction it can lay upon us ? How can we refuse in submission to God's pleasure, to bear contentedly a slight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore a cross, infinitely more grievous to carnal will and sense than any that can befall us ? Can we expect, can we affect, can we desire great prosperity, whenas the Son of God, our Lord and Master, did only taste such adversity ? Who can admire those splendid trifles which our Lord did never regard in his life, which at his death did only serve to mock and abuse him ? Who can relish those sordid pleasures, of which he living did not vouchsafe to taste, and the contraries whereof he dying choose to feel in all extremity ? Who will dare to vilify, to disdain, to reject a state of sorrow or disgrace, which he by a voluntary susception of it hath so dignified and graced ; by which we resemble and become conformable to him ; by which we concur and partake with him ; yea, by which we may promote, and in a sort complete, his designs ; *filling up* (as St. Paul speaketh) *that which*

is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh? Who now can much prefer being esteemed, applauded, approved, or favoured by men, before infamy, reproach, derision, or persecution from them, especially when these do follow conscientious adherence to righteousness? Who can be very ambitious of worldly honour or repute, covetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who observeth the only Son of God choosing rather to hang upon a cross than to sit upon a throne; inviting the clamours of spite and scorn, rather than acclamations of blessing and praise; divesting himself of all secular pomp, plenty, conveniences, and solaces; embracing the garb of a slave and the repute of a malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a prince, which were his due, and which he could easily have obtained. Can we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and prosperous in this world, to swim here in affluence and pleasure; can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants or straits here, seeing the fountain of all happiness did himself condescend to so forlorn a state, and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer? If with the eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon the gibbet, be-

smeared with his own blood, groaning under extreme anguish of pain, encompassed with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding* (as the prophet foretold of him *(his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from shame and spitting ;* will not the imagination of such a sight dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all the glee which we can find in any wild frolics or riotous merriments ?

SERMON.
THE REASONABLENESS AND EQUITY OF
A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

Eccles. iii, 17.

I said in my heart God shall judge the righteous
and the wicked:

HOPE AND FEAR THE MAINSPRINGS
OF HUMAN ACTION.

He that will consider the nature of men, or observe their common practice (marking what apprehensions usually steer them, what inclinations sway them, in their elections and pursuits of things), shall, I suppose, find, that from an invincible principle of self-love, or sensuality, deriving itself through all their motions of soul, and into all their

actions of life, men generally do so strongly propend to the enjoyment of present sensible goods, that nothing but a presumption of some considerable benefit to be obtained by abstinence from them, or of some grievous mischief consequent on the embracing them, can withhold them from pursuing such enjoyment. From hence (seeing fancy, reason, and experience do all prompt men to a foresight of events, and force them to some regard of the consequences of things) it followeth that hope and fear are the main springs which set on work all the wheels of human action ; so that any matter being propounded, if men can hope that it will yield pleasant or profitable (that is, tending to pleasant) fruits, they will undertake it ; if they do fear its consequences will be distasteful or hurtful, they will decline it : very rare it is to find, that the love or liking of a thing, as in itself amiable to the mind, or suitable to reason, doth incline men thereto ; that honest things, bare of present advantages, and barren of hopeful fruits, are heartily pursued ; that any thing otherwise averteth us from itself, than as immediately presenting some mischief, or dangerously threatening it. When goodness therefore doth clash with interest or pleasure, *human*

wisdom (the *natural sense of the flesh*, which St. Paul speaketh of as opposite to virtue) will dispose men to take part with these ; and except some higher aid come in to succour goodness, it is odds that ever they will prevail over it. If it do appear that virtue can pay men well for their pains, they may perhaps be her servants ; but they will hardly wait on her in pure courtesy, or work in her service for nothing : if she bringeth visibly a good dowry with her, she may be courted ; but her mere beauty, or worth, will draw few suitors to her : who will forego sensible pleasures, or waive substantial profit ; who will reject the overtures of power or honour for her sake ? And if vice, how ill soever it look or leer, do offer fairly, how many persons will be so nice or squeamish, as merely out of fancy, or in despite to her, to refuse or renounce her ? In short, as men are baited with pleasure or bribed with profit, so they pursue ; as they are stung with pain or curbed with fear, so they eschew things ; it is a gift (or a specious appearance of some good offered) which perpetually moveth the greatest part, which often *blindeth the eyes and perverteth the heart* of the wisest sort of men.

THIS LIFE IS NOT A TIME OF
REAPING BUT OF SOWING.

THIS life is not a time of reaping but of sowing ; not of approbation, but of trial ; not of triumph, but of combat : this world is not a place of enjoyment, but of work ; our condition here is not a state of settlement, but of travel ; whence no man should expect more of encouragement than is needful to support him in this work and way ; should look to receive wages before his task is done ; to get the prize, before he hath gone through the race ; to gather the spoils, before he hath fought out the battle ; to enjoy rest, before he is at his journey's end ; to be put in full possession of happiness, before his right and title thereto is completely assured : that no man also should presume or please himself upon present impunity for his misbehaviour or sloth, like those of whom the Preacher saith, *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil* ; seeing this is the season of mercy and patience, when God commonly doth not further inflict crosses on us, than may serve to mind us of our duty, or urge

us to the performance of it ; and seeing the longer vengeance is withheld, the more heavy it will at last fall on us, if we despise the present season of grace, and proceed to the end in impenitence : that present impunity, therefore, is a sore punishment, and correction here really a great favour.

Thus doth it, upon many accounts, appear fit and needful that there should be a future judgment ; the apprehension thereof being the sharpest spur to virtue, the strongest curb from vice, the surest fence of human society, the safest bulwark of religion (securing the authority of God, and guarding His providence, together with all His holy attributes, from all batteries, all sinister aspersions, all profane misconstructions ;) in short, the most effectual means, if it be heartily embraced, to render men, in their minds and in their enjoyments, sober, just in their dealings toward their neighbour, and in all their life pious toward God ; there being indeed no consideration, whereof the mind of man is capable, more apt to beget in him a care and conscience of what he doeth, than this : that after a very short and transitory life all his actions must undergo a strict scrutiny, according to the result, whereof he either shall be approved and

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rewarded, or condemned and punished : whereof any man being thoroughly persuaded, and anywise considering it, he cannot surely but accuse himself of extreme folly and madness if he doth not provide for that account, and order all his practice with a regard thereto. The which use of this point God by his grace dispose us to make, for the sake of Jesus, our blessed Redeemer, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

SERMON.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE CREED.

I believe in God, &c.

THE ADMIRABLE ORDER EVINCED IN
THE WORKS OF THE CREATOR.

THE most to us observable piece of the universe is the earth, upon which we dwell ; which, that it was designed for the accommodation of living creatures, that are upon it, and principally of man, we cannot be ignorant or doubtful, if we be not so negligent or stupid as to let pass unobserved those innumerable signs and arguments that show it : if we look upon the frame of the animals themselves, what a number of admirable contrivances in each of them do appear for the sustenance, for the safety, for the pleasure, for the propagation, for grace and ornament,

for all imaginable convenience, suitable to the kind and station of each ! If we look about them, what variety and abundance of convenient provisions offer themselves even to a careless view, answerable to all their needs and all their desires ! Wholesome and pleasant food, to maintain their life, yea, to gratify all their senses ; fit shelter from offence, and safe refuge from dangers ; all these things provided in sufficient plenty, and commodiously disposed, for such a vast number of creatures ; not the least, most silly, weak, or contemptible creature, but we may see some care hath been had for its nourishment and comfort : what wonderful instincts are they endued with, for procuring and distinguishing of their food, for guarding themselves and their young from danger ! But for man especially a most liberal provision hath been made, to supply all his needs ; to please all his appetites ; to exercise, with profit and satisfaction, all his faculties ; to content (I might say) his utmost curiosity : all things about him do minister (or may do so, if he will use the natural powers and instruments given him) to his preservation, ease, and delight. The bowels of the earth yield him treasures of metals and minerals ; quarries of stone and

coal, serviceable to him for various uses. The vilest and commonest stones he treadeth upon are not unprofitable. The surface of the earth, what variety of delicate fruits, herbs, and grains, doth it afford, to nourish our bodies, and cheer our spirits, and please our tastes, and remedy our diseases! how many fragrant flowers, most beautiful and goodly in colour and shape, for the comfort of our smell and delight of our eyes! Neither can our ears complain, since every wood hath a choir of natural musicians, to entertain them with their sprightly melody! Every wood, did I say? yes too, the woods, adorned with stately trees, yield pleasant spectacles to our sight, shelter from offences of weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our buildings (our houses and shipping), and other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary for the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance and maintaining of intercourse among us. Even the wide seas themselves serve us many ways: they are commodious for our traffick and commerce: they supply the bottles of heaven with water to refresh the earth: they are inexhaustible sources,

whence our springs and rivers are derived ; they yield stores of good fish, and other conveniences of life. The very rude and disorderly winds do us no little service, in brushing and cleansing the air for our health ; in driving forward our ships ; in scattering and spreading about the clouds, those clouds which drop fatness upon our grounds. As for our subjects, the animals, it is not possible to reckon the manifold utilities we receive from them : how many ways they supply our needs with pleasant food and convenient clothing ; how they ease our labour ; and how they promote even our sport and recreation. And are we not, not only very stupid, but very ungrateful, if we do not discern abundance of wisdom and goodness in the contrivance and ordering of all these things, so as thus to conspire for our good ? Is it not reasonable that we devoutly cry out with the Psalmist, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all : the earth is full of thy riches : so is the wide and great sea, &c.* To say this grace with him, *The eyes of all wait upon thee ; and thou givest them their meat in due season : thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing : especially to say further, Lord what is man,*

that thou art so mindful of him ? and the son of man, that thou visitest him ? Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands ; thou hast put all things under his feet.

Can any man, endued with common sense, imagine that such a body as any of us doth bear about him, so neatly composed, fitted to so many purposes of action, furnished with so many goodly and proper organs ; that eye, by which we reach the stars, and in a moment have, as it were, all the world present to us ; that ear, by which we so subtly distinguish the differences of sound, are sensible of so various harmony, have conveyed unto our minds the words and thoughts each of other ; that tongue, by which we so readily imitate those vast diversities of voice and tune, by which we communicate our minds with such ease and advantage ; that hand, by which we perform so many admirable works, and which serves instead of a thousand instruments and weapons unto us ; to omit those inward springs of motion, life, sense, imagination, memory, passion, with so stupendous curiosity contrived : can any man, I say, conceive that so rare a piece, consisting of such parts, unexpressibly various, unconceivably curious, the want of any

of which would discompose or destroy us ; subservient to such excellent operations, incomparably surpassing all the works of the most exquisite art that we could ever observe or conceive, be the product of blind chance ; arise from tortuitous jumbings of matter ; be effected without exceeding great wisdom, without most deep counsel and design ? Might not the most excellent pieces of human artifice, the fairest structures, the finest pictures, the most useful engines, such as we are wont so much to admire and praise, much more easily happen to be without any skill or contrivance ? If we cannot allow these rude and gross imitations of nature to come of themselves, but will presently, so soon as we see them, acknowledge them the products of art, though we know not the artist, nor did see him work ; how much more reasonable is it that we believe the works of nature, so much more fine and accurate, to proceed from the like cause, though invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a secret hand ? I am sure the most diligent contemplators of nature, and those of the most incredulous temper, and freest from any prejudice favourable to religion, have not been able to deny, that abundance of counsel and wisdom discovers

itself in the works of nature : Aristotle (whom no man surely takes for superstitious or partial to the interests of religion) hath a whole chapter in his *Physics* to prove that nature works with design and for an end : and elsewhere he affirms, nature doeth all things for some end : yea further, tending to an end, and endeavouring what is best, is more observable in the works of nature than in those of art. This he speaketh in his books *De Partibus Animalium*, the consideration of which extorteth this confession from him : and if nature works so much for an end, there must be an understanding that intends it, and orders fit means for attaining it. Galen is observed in some places of his writings to speak somewhat irreligiously, yet in his books *De Usu Partium* he cannot forbear admiring the wisdom that shines forth in the structure of our bodies, breaking forth sometimes into hymns of praise and thankfulness to him that made it. The like expressions hath Cardan, such another not over-devout philosopher.

Thus much the most common and obvious effects of nature here below, within us and about us, do signify to us : thus, as St. Paul preached, *God hath not left himself unattested*, doing good, sending us from

heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness ; nor do the heavens less declare the glory of God, and the firmament his handy-work : he that shall consider with what regularity and with what constancy those vast bodies perform their rapid motions ; what pleasure, comfort, and advantage, their goodly light doth yield us ; how necessary and profitable to us the vicissitudes of time and the recourses of seasons are, which they make ; how their influences conduce to the general welfare and preservation of things here below, cannot but wonder, and wondering adore that beneficent wisdom and power that hath disposed and still preserves them in such order. Could they without a wise hand, by a casual running together of atoms, or whatever senseless matter, be so ordered, as for six thousand years together to persist in the same places, and retain the same periods of time, in their motion, without any sensible alteration ? He that can think it, may think any thing, and it were in vain to endeavour to confute him.

But this argument is infinite and inexhaustible ; as full and pregnant as is the world of creatures : each of which is a wonder, and proclaims the incomprehensible wisdom,

power, and goodness of its Maker to us : we cannot without stopping our eyes exclude that light of divine glory, which fills and illustrates the world : without stopping our ears, we cannot but hear that universal shout (that real harmony of the spheres) which all the creatures in heaven and earth consent in utterance to his praise. Every star in heaven, every beast upon earth, every plant, every mineral, yea every stone : some in a language very loud and expressive proclaim, others in a more still and low (yet to an attentive ear sufficiently audible and significant) strain, do speak those most glorious properties of God : *There is no speech or language, where their voice is not heard ; their accent is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world,* as the Psalmist sings. The cognosibility of God, is manifest in and by them : and the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and divinity, are perceived by observing the makes and constitutions of the creatures in the world ; as St. Paul's words maybe rendered, with which I conclude this argument.

THE BEST RULES OF BEHAVIOUR
TOWARDS EACH OTHER TO BE
FOUND IN THE GOSPEL.

AND for our behaviour toward each other, what better directions can we have, than those which our gospel affords us : that we cordially love one another, earnestly desire each other's good, pity all the evils of our brethren, be ready to afford them all the help and comfort we can, not limiting this our charity, but extending it to all, in imitation of God's boundless beneficence ; that we should mutually bear infirmities, and pardon all injuries done us, not rendering evil for good, but requiting evil with good that we be just and honest in all our dealings, observant of all duties concerning our relations, diligent in our callings, peaceable and quiet in our stations, respective and obedient to our superiors, meek and gentle and courteous in our behaviour toward all men, rooting out all malice, wrath, envy, strife, animosity, ill suspicion, out of our hearts, forbearing to revile, slander, detract, or rashly to censure any man. Now, what great benefits is it not evident that the practice of such duties would bring forth ! what

mischiefs would it prevent! How sociable and pleasant, and secure a life, should we lead therein! What innumerable griefs and trouble, fears and suspicions, discomposures and distractions of mind at home; what dangers, tumults, confusions, and tragedies abroad, would it remove! This part, therefore, of our rule plainly deserves the impression of divine authority upon it. As for the precepts concerning the management of ourselves, our own souls and bodies; those which oblige us to be humble and modest, calm and serene, contented and patient, pure and chaste, sober and temperate, banishing all haughty conceits and vain opinions concerning ourselves, regulating our passions and restraining our appetites, moderating ourselves in all corporeal enjoyments, possessing our vessels in sanctity and honour, abstaining from all unlawful and irregular pleasures (base in kind or excessive in degree), which may corrupt our minds, or impair our healths, or disturb our quiet: it prohibits us not the use of any creature whence we may receive any profit or delight, but indulges us a prudent and sober enjoyment of them all, with sense of God's goodness and thankfulness (1 Tim. iv. 4.) And who sees not what benefit and convenience

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doth accrue to us from obeying such commands? In a few words, *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are decent, whatsoever, things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue or any praise*, those things the Christian doctrine enjoins us to regard and practise. And what other religion, I pray, or what philosophy, hath so perfectly and clearly, with such consistence and with such confidence, taught us the like? If any have taught us some of them (as it is no wonder if they should, since all of them are so plainly agreeable to good reason), yet could none press them with such effectual inducements, nor enforce the practice of them upon so true and necessary grounds. Some philosophies have highly commended virtue, and vehemently exhorted thereto; but the ends are mean which they aim at, the grounds very weak from which they argue: present satisfaction and tranquillity of mind, safety, convenience, and pleasure of this life; can they persuade men easily that these are sufficient inducements so carefully and painfully to follow virtue? Doth that thing deserve such mighty eulogies, which hath no greater rewards or benefits than those attending it?

No, surely. He that tells us, by doing these we shall imitate the highest goodness, we shall honour God and please him, we shall perform a duty of gratitude to our great Benefactor, we shall obtain the love and favour of God, we shall avoid his wrath and displeasure, we shall acquire not only comfort and peace of conscience here, but an everlasting crowd of joy and bliss hereafter; he propoundeth ends infinitely more noble, he useth arguments incomparable, most efficacious and persuasive to the practice of virtue. No philosophy in any measure represents virtue so truly upon all accounts estimable and eligible as this; none can discover the excellent fruits that grow upon it.

SERMON.

THE BEING OF GOD PROVED FROM THE
FRAME OF THE WORLD.

Jer. xi 115.

He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding:

PROOFS OF THE BEING OF GOD.

Who shaped and tempered those hidden, subtle springs of life, sense, imagination, memory, passion? who impressed on them a motion so regular and so durable, which through so many years, among so many adverse contingencies assailing it, is yet so steadily maintained? Can this, however, proceed from giddy chance, or blind necessity? could ever (of old or lately, it is all

one) senseless matter jumble itself so fortunately, into so wonderful postures, so that of those innumerable myriads of atoms, or small insensible bodies (which compose each of these curious engines), none should in its roving miss the way; none fail to stop and seat itself in that due place, where exactest art would have disposed it? Could so many, so dim, so narrow marks, be hit without the aim of a most piercing and unerring eye; without the guidance of a most steady and immoveable hand? All that grace and beauty, which so delights our sense beholding it; all that correspondence and symmetry, which so satisfies our mind considering it; all that virtue and energy, extending to performances so great and admirable, must they be ascribed to causes of no worth, and supposed done to no purpose? that eye which reaches the very stars, and in a moment renders all the world, as it were present to the creature that useth it; that ear which perceives the least stirring of the air about it, and so subtly distinguishes the smallest differences in its motion; that tongue which is so readily composed to imitate so many petty diversities of tune; those other organs, which are affected by the least breath or vapour, by the least tang

or savour, so that it by them can both perceive the presence, and distinguish the quality of whatever is near, that it may not be disappointed in missing what is beneficial, nor be surprised by the assault of what is noxious thereto ; all these and many more, the defect, distemper, or dislocation of which would be disgraceful, incommodious, or destructive to the creature ; all these, I say, can any man, endued with common sense, or ordinary ingenuity, affirm to have proceeded from any other cause, than from a wisdom and power incomprehensible ? May not the most excellent, pieces of human artifice, the fairest structures, the finest portraitures, the most ingenious and useful enquiries, such as we are wont most to admire and commend, with infinitely more ease, happen to exist without any contrivance or industry spent upon them ? If we cannot allow those rude imitations of nature to spring up of themselves, but as soon as we espy them are ready to acknowledge them products of an excellent art, although we know not the artist, nor did see him work ; how much more reason is there that we should believe those works of nature, so incomparably more accurate, to proceed also from art, although invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a

secret hand ? I can assure you, of those who have with the greatest attention contemplated these things, and who pass for men most able to judge in the case (even those who have discovered least affection to religion, or indeed are more than suspected of an aversion from it ; whose words therefore at least may be taken for impartial dictates of common sense), that even from such, the irresistible force and evidence of the thing hath extorted clear and ample confessions to this purpose : that in nature nothing is performed without reason or design ; but every thing in the best manner and to the best end, beyond what is done in any art, is frequently asserted and assumed by Aristotle himself, as a most evident truth ; that in contriving the frame of our bodies, (and the same holdeth good concerning the bodies of other animals) a wisdom inscrutable ; in accomplishing it, a power insuperable ; in designing to them so much of decency and convenience, a benignity worthy of all veneration are demonstrated, Galen in several places, with language very full and express, yea very earnest and pathetic, doth acknowledge, That who doth attentively regard a locust, or a caterpillar, or any other viler animal, shall every where therein

discover a wonderful art and diligence, is an aphorism dropt even from the gloomy pen of Cardan. That *if any man shall view thoroughly all the instruments both of generation and nutrition, and doth not perceive them to have been made and ordered to their respective offices by some mind* (or intelligent agent), *he is to be reputed himself void of mind* (or out of his wits), is the expression of another person well known among us, whom few do judge partial to this side, or suspicious of bearing a favourable prejudice to religion. Thus doth common sense from these sort of beings, whereof there be innumerable exposed daily to our observation, even singly considered, deduce the existence of a wisdom, power, and goodness unconceivably great; and there are probably divers others (stones, metals, minerals, &c.) no less obvious, even here upon the earth, our place of dwelling, which, were our senses able to discern their constitution and texture, would afford matter of the same acknowledgment.

SERMON.

AN EXPOSITION ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

PRAYER is not only a means, by impetration acquiring for us, but it is an effectual instrument working in us all true good ; it is the channel by which God conveyeth spiritual light into our minds, and spiritual vigour into our hearts. It is both the seed and the food of spiritual life ; by which all holy dispositions of soul and all honest resolutions of practice are bred and nourished, are augmented and strengthened in us. It exciteth, it quickeneth, it maintaineth all pious affections ; the love of God can no otherwise than by it be kindled, fomented, or kept in life (without it we certainly shall have an estrangement, and an aversion

from him ;) it alone can maintain a constant reverence and awe of God, keeping him in our thoughts, and making us to live as in his presence ; it chiefly enliveneth and exerciseth our faith and our hope in God ; it is that which begetteth in our hearts a savoury relish of divine things, which sweeteneth and endeareth to our souls the practice of piety, which only can enable us with delight and alacrity to obey God's commandments ; it alone can raise our minds, from the cares and concernments of this world, to a sense and desire of heavenly things. By it God imparteth strength to subdue bad inclinations, to restrain sensual appetites, to compress irregular passions ; to evade the allurements to evil, and the discouragements from good, which this world always presenteth ; to support also with patience and equanimity the many crosses and troubles we must surely meet with therein. It is, in short, the only strong bulwark against temptation and sin ; the only safe guard of piety and a good conscience : no man indeed can be a faithful servant to God, a real friend to goodness, a serious practiser of duty, without a constant tenor of devotion.

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